REVIEWS

THE ANCIENT WORLD

ULLA KOCH-WESTENHOLZ:
_Babylonian liver omens: the chapters Manza, Padānu and Pān tākalti of the Babylonian extispicy series, mainly from Aššurbanipal’s library._


The cuneiform tablets recovered in the nineteenth century from the ruined palaces of Assyrian kings at Nineveh continue to give up their secrets. Slowly, very slowly, the small international community of Assyriologists is processing the huge morass of primary material and making it available to those who do not read cuneiform. In this pioneering work texts of mythological, literary and historical interest have been most often the focus of scholarly attention. As a consequence, however, a large proportion of the less immediately exciting Assyrian tablets has been neglected, remaining either completely unpublished or available only as unannotated cuneiform texts. Some years ago a Finnish scholar, Simo Parpola, described the archival documents from Nineveh as essentially a ‘heap of meaningless junk’. Since then he and others in Helsinki have transformed Neo-Assyrian studies by sorting, studying and editing the tablets in the fifteen volumes of the _State Archives of Assyria_ (Helsinki, 1987–). With the project nearing completion there exists at last a tool for research into every aspect of seventh-century Assyria that can be used by everyone. The junk is junk no more.

The book under review represents the beginning of a similar project. Very many tablets from the royal libraries of Nineveh contain texts concerned with divination by inspecting the organs of sacrificial animals. The ancient scholars’ reports on individual acts of extispicy have been collected and edited twice, the last time in the _State Archives of Assyria_ series. However, the much larger corpus of professional divination compendia, which account for so large a proportion of the Assyrian libraries, has enjoyed very little attention in the last hundred years. Many tablets of omens have been published in cuneiform only and others not at all. Very few editions have been made of any of the many dozens of individual omen compendia from Nineveh.

Extispicy was one of the principal pillars of ancient Mesopotamian religious, intellectual and political life, since it was believed to afford the most reliable means of questioning the gods about their intentions and desires. To be privy to the will of God was what ancient man yearned for most. Diviners held the key to the manipulation of this channel of communication and their expertise was accordingly a vital tool in the exercise of political power. Consequently a book which sets out to make sense of the fragmentary remains of King Aššurbanipal’s considerable library of extispicial omen tablets by editing and translating them—this provides the primary source material for the study of a central instrument of Babylonian culture.

Ulla Koch-Westenholz’s pioneering work presents a modern edition of about twenty-seven ancient omen compendia and thus begins the transmission
of the cuneiform texts in usable form to the scholarly world at large. Some idea of the task at hand can be gained from considering that these twenty-seven tablets, which occupy a book of nearly 600 pages, including cuneiform copies, are only a fraction of the material at hand. Not only does the rest of the series of Nineveh tablets await the same treatment but, in addition, sources from other sites will come eventually to be included. For the finds of Nineveh were only the first of an avalanche of tablets that has filled the storerooms of museums and private collectors all over Europe, North America and the Middle East.

This magnificent volume is only the beginning of the process of transmitting to the modern world the most characteristic intellectual activity of the first high civilization in human history. Its appearance is truly an important event in the study of the ancient world, to be welcomed by Assyriologists, historians of intellectual life and students of other ancient cultures alike. More please.

A. R. GEORGE

THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

FARHAD DAFTARY (ed.):
_Mediaeval Ismā‘īlī history and thought._

Since it first appeared in 1996, Daftary’s collection of scholarly articles on the medieval Ismailis has drawn consistently good reviews. The themes selected in this collection are drawn from the pre-Fatimid, Fatimid and Nizārī periods of Ismaili history and the contributors represent the full range of modern scholarship. This affordable edition of what has already become an indispensable volume for any Islamic history collection is to be applauded.

Daftary provides a useful introduction which not only outlines the history of the _da‘wa_, the principal dā‘īs, and Ismaili dawla but also details more modern Ismaili scholarship and the backgrounds of his book’s contributors. He later contributes a chapter himself on Ḥasan-i Șabbāḥ and the origins of the Nizārīs.

The first part of this Ismaili collection is concerned with the pre-Fatimid and Fatimid periods of history. Wilferd Madelung offers an update of his 1959 landmark study of the Qaramätis of Bahrain and the Fatimids, dispelling the myth of their collaboration, and he also submits a study of Sījista and the Ismaili attitude to the Intellect (al-‘aql). Heinz Halm contributes two chapters, one dealing with early Ismaili cosmology and the second examining the controversial subject of initiation into the fold of the faithful. The process of legal codification and the work of the early Fatimid jurist, al-Qādī al-Nu’mān, is the subject of the chapter by Ismaili Poonawala, while Abbas Hamdani returns to a favoured area, the dating and authorship of the _Rasā‘īl Ikhwān al-Ṣafā‘_. The two remaining chapters deal with the Ismaili attitude towards the ‘other’ during the Fatimid period, Azim Nanji uses the same _Rasā‘īl Ikhwān al-Ṣafā‘_ as a principal source to illustrate the Ismailis’ ‘pluralistic and non-dogmatic approaches’ (p. 14) to other religions, while
Paul Walker introduces a unique Ismaili heresiography, the *kitāb al-Shajara*, the work of Abū Tamām, an obscure early tenth-century C.E. dāʾī.

The second part of the book focuses on the Alamuṯ period of Ismaili history, opening with Daftary’s own account of the origins of the Nizāris. He portrays the movement in part as an ‘Iranian’ protest against the Saljuqs with social roots pre-dating this period, rather than as a schismatic reaction to events in Egypt, as it is traditionally presented. Also examined are the doctrinal and political developments which occurred in the early years of Alamuṯ, particularly under Hasan-i Sabbāh, whose role was so crucial in the establishment of this independent *daʿwa* and quasi-state. Carole Hillenbrand examines the same period from the point of view of the Saljuqs, drawing on evidence of Saljuq-Nizāri encounters found in the work of Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn al-Jawzī and other chroniclers openly hostile to the Ismailis.

The Saljuqs were not the only enemies of the Ismailis. In the mountainous region of what is today eastern Iran, the medieval Ismailis had established a stronghold in the area called Quhistan. Heterodoxy had a long history here and the Saljuq administration had never been popular. But after the Ismailis became firmly entrenched in the region’s inaccessible valleys, they found that their neighbours to the south, the Naṣrid Malikis of Sīstān or Nimrūz, were as hostile to their presence as the Saljuqs themselves, especially after Ismaili attempts to extend their power and influence south. It is the relationship between the Quhistani Nizāris and the Naṣrid Malikis that C. E. Bosworth explores in the twelfth chapter. The controversial role of the one-time resident of Quhistan, Naṣr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, is the subject of the following chapter by Hamid Dabashi. He portrays Ṭūsī as a philosopher/vizier, a traditional Persian figure whose role stands above the sectarian intrigues and affiliations into which Ṭūsī’s name has sometimes been dragged.

Moving to the western reaches of the Ismaili *daʿwa*, Charles Melville considers the Nizāris as assassins, and illustrates the transformation of the Nizāri *fidāʾī* into the paid assassins of the Mamluks with the curious case of the defector Qurāṣunqur and the attempts by Sultan al-Nāṣir Moḥammad to have him killed. For the chroniclers, the Syrian Nizāri Ismaili community were the sole suppliers of assassins for the Mamluk sultans even though at the time there were very few actual *fidāʾī* left which, concludes Melville, ‘reveal the persistence of the distorted image of the Ismāʿīlīs and hostile rumours surrounding their community.’ (p. 258).

The two final chapters move away from Alamūt to the post-Mongol period. Ali Asani re-examines the South Asian *gināns*, devotional poems that have acquired ‘sacred’ status within the Nizāri Khoja community. The authorship and provenance of these orally transmitted *gināns* seems at odds with traditional belief, and their transmission more complex than previously assumed. Often these poems appear to be about rather than by the pirs who arose among the original Hindu converts of the emerging Ismaili community. Abbas Amanat’s contribution on the Nuqṭawiyya, an esoteric off-shoot of the Hurufis, is the first scholarly investigation of this ghulat sect also known as Aḥl-i Nuqṭa, the Pasikhāniyya, or the Maḥmūdiyya. Founded by Maḥmūd Pasikhāni (d. 1427–8), the sect was well established in Qazvin, Shiraz, Kashan, Isfahan and the Caspian region during the early Safavid period even though its adherents were the objects of often severe persecution. Amanat’s study shows that despite the sect’s belief in materialist metempsychosis, its denial of the Imamate, and Pasikhānī’s claims to prophethood, the core doctrines of the Nuqṭawiyya, espousing a cyclical view of time and hierohistory and the
sect’s reliance on baṭātī (esoteric) exegesis demonstrate the underlying Ismaili roots.

Farhad Daftary is head of the department of Academic Research and Publications at the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London and has published many books and papers on Ismaili thought and history, subjects on which he is a widely recognized authority. The appearance in paperback of this absorbing and scholarly collection of essays should do much to advance the cause of Ismaili studies to a widening audience.

GEORGE LANE

D. S. RICHARDS (trans.):
The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin.

The work under review is a translation of Ibn Shaddād’s (d. 632/1234) al-Nawādīr al-sūfīyya wa’t-mahāsin al-yūsufyya, a partly annalistic biography of the Ayyubid ruler Saladin (d. 589/1193). Written by a member of Saladin’s immediate entourage, the text is of outstanding importance for students of the history of this period, both within the Middle Eastern context and, more specifically, for the history of the Crusades. The work has been well known in Europe since the French translation of extracts in the Receuil des Historiens des Croisades at the turn of the last century and the English translation by C. W. Wilson, Saladin: or what befell Sultan Yusuf (London, 1897). The Arabic text was published by Gama‘l al-Dīn al-Shayyāl in 1964.

Richards bases his translation on the 1964 edition and the Berlin manuscript (Ahlwardt no. 9811) of the work, which al-Shayyāl did not consult for his edition. The differences between the Berlin manuscript and those used for the edition are of minor importance. Consequently, the additions to the text on this basis are of interest only to a specialized audience. The introduction offers a short overview of the author’s life, his works and existing manuscripts, editions and translations. This brief section, in addition to the maps in the annex, helps the non-specialist reader to situate the process of writing of the al-Nawādīr and its content. The index lists names of persons and places, while sadly omitting termini technici.

The importance of Richards’ translation lies in the fact that this crucial text of the Crusading period has now been updated and decisively improved in its English version compared with the 1897 translation, which was rather unreliable. Richards succeeds in rendering the original into an English text which is at the same time a pleasure to read and largely reliable. Compared to the patchy quality of previous translations the author is to be congratulated for this fine piece of Arabist scholarship. The translation gains in significance because it is published in the framework of the Crusade Texts in Translation series as the first Middle Eastern source, which decisively widens the breadth of this series.

However, some points remain to be made which are more relevant for students of Middle Eastern history. The introduction is based mainly on al-Shayyāl’s introduction to the 1964 edition without the addition of new information. It cites for example works by Ibn Shaddād in manuscript form which have since been published, such as his Dala’il al-ahkām (M. Shaykāni and Z. Ayyūbī, Damascus: Dār Qutayba, 1992/93). Secondary literature on
Ibn Shaddād published since the 1960s, such as M. Ripke’s Inaugural Dissertation Saladin und sein Biograph Bahā’addīn b. Šaddād (University of Bonn, submitted 1980, published 1988) has not been included. The notes to Abū Shāma’s (d. 665/1267) work al-Rawdatayn are based on the now outdated Bulaq edition (1870–72), while a recent edition offers a more reliable version of the text (I. al-Zibaq, Beirut: al-Resaleh Publishers, 1997, 4 vols + index).

With regard to the translation, it would have been helpful, especially for the wider audience of a translated text, to define certain Arabic terms, such as *khutba* (p. 47), *Atabeg* (p. 68) and *Tawāshī* (p. 136). The same applies to the personal and geographical names, which are only partly explained; for example, a short reference that Šāfād refers to Saphet might have been helpful. Similarly, an explanatory note on an individual such as ‘Abd al-Masih might have been of interest in such a crucial text on the Crusade period. Having played a controversial role in Mosul during the period of Nūr al-Dīn he was obliged to change his name to ‘Abd Allāh but made a career under his old name under Saladin (on the former see Ibn Wāsil, Muṣaffaj al-kurāb, vol. 1, pp. 192f., p. 196; vol. 2, p. 39; ed.: al-Shayyāl Cairo 1953–57).

It is confusing that certain terms are sometimes transcribed and sometimes translated without a visible system. The term *iqtā* appears frequently in transcription, but is also translated as ‘feudal grants’ (p. 34) or ‘fief’ (p. 202). Similarly, *jihād* appears generally in transcription, but also as ‘Holy War’ (p. 62). The situation is rendered more complicated as *ghazā* is occasionally ‘translated’/’transcribed’ as *jihād* (p. 200), but also as ‘to fight for the faith’ (p. 189) and ‘campaigning’ (p. 197), while *ghuza* appears in the text as ‘volunteer warriors’ (p. 189) or ‘jihād warrior’ (p. 80). It would have been helpful, with an eye to the wider audience, to translate these terms consistently and to discuss them briefly because of their central importance to issues such as social history (‘feudalism’) and the encounter between Crusaders and Muslims.

Other terms, such as *mulk*, are indeed better translated with different words. However, a translation of this term with a variety of words including ‘kingship’ (p. 51), ‘rule’, ‘control’ (p. 78), ‘power’ (p. 51) and ‘sovereignty’ (p. 72) could have been accompanied by an explanatory notice. In general, these examples raise the problem of the degree to which translations of historical texts are possible without an emphasis on defining the context of key terms.

The practice of arbitrarily inserting and omitting benedictory phrases in the course of the text, contrary to the statement in the introduction, is problematic. A similar problem is the occasional replacement of the personal pronoun for Saladin with either ‘Saladin’ or ‘the sultan’ with no apparent system.

Mistakes are rare in this excellent work of translation. The example of ‘noble qualities of character’ such as shaking hands (p. 35) refers to the Prophet Muhammad not to Saladin as stated in the text (read ‘Whenever he [the Prophet]’ instead of ‘Whenever the sultan’). Occasionally the translator does not take into consideration the many corrections in the annex of the 1964 edition. The ‘welcoming face’ (p. 35) is, for example, a ‘welcoming hand’.

In sum this translation is an important contribution to the field of Crusading studies. Despite some minor problems, it is of high Arabist quality and it can only be hoped that future translations of other Arabic texts of the Crusader period will follow this example.

KONRAD HIRSCHLER
Robinson's book is concerned with post-conquest and Umayyad Northern Mesopotamia, i.e. the Jazira, with particular reference to the emergence of the city of Mosul as an Islamic city, both in physical and social terms. The author discusses the growth of this town, particularly in the Marwanid period, through the use of literary sources, the most prominent of which is the Ta’rikh al-Mawsil by Yazid b. Muḥammad al-Azdī (d. c. 945). Although parts of this annalistic history are lost, al-Azdī was a native Mosuli and seems to have preserved many local accounts from this period. The author also relies, with great effect, on the Christian sources for the period, again with much of the material being local or regional. He shows that it is possible to write pre-Abbasid history in a useful form through the use of these literary sources and interpretation of the accounts they preserve.

The first chapter of the book discusses the problem of the absence of authentic documentary sources on the Arab conquest of the region and proposes a method in which the extant material can be interpreted. This chapter, and indeed much of the book, attempts to solve a dilemma faced by any historian of the early Islamic period: what to do with material that is incoherent or inconsistent. Robinson argues that the ‘conquest history’ which is extant to us through the literary sources can be put to good use in understanding the period in which it was produced. This material reveals post-conquest history and administrative arrangements that evolved several generations later and projects them back in the guise of conquest history in order to set precedents for their current arguments. He sees the post-conquest history as that which illustrates the conflict between the Muslim and Christian élites of the area. It is an attempt to define relations, including taxation, between these communities several generations after the conquest.

Chapter ii describes political affairs in post-conquest Jazira, where it seems that during the Sufyanid period the caliphs were primarily interested in the tribal politics of the Arabs of the area. The author argues that it was only in the Marwanid period that the caliphs decided that the Jazira could be a source of revenue and it is then that they turned their attention to organizing its administration and taxation, finally developing it into a real administrative province. In chapter iii the growth of Mosul from a garrison town to a city is discussed. This pattern of change took place in Iraq after the Arab conquests in places like Kufa, but its details are still not clear. The author argues that in Mosul, however, a Marwanid stage in this pattern is clearly discernible. He shows how the Marwanids employed a combination of direct family rule and an ambitious programme of private and public building. They built canals that allowed further settlement and therefore growth. Elite residential compounds and irrigation works were developed which allowed further agricultural development. With this the military tribal élite gave way to an élite of landowners and office holders.

In chapter iv, the author discusses the Christian élites in the hinterland of Mosul, showing how the Shahārija, wealthy landowners similar to the dihqāns in other parts of Iraq and Persia, who collected taxes from their villages, persisted into the ninth century. This shows that there was little social
dislocation in this region as a result of the Arab conquests. It also demonstrates that, even in the ninth century, the reach of the city-based conquering power was limited. This is discussed in chapter v, which turns to the Kharîjîtes of the Jazîra, describing their composition and their aspiration. The author concludes that these pastoralist tribesmen were not the violent revolutionaries they were elsewhere, and are perhaps better described as restive ‘communities of saints’, who were not intent on destroying the ruling Umayyads, but rather sought to expose their corrupt and wayward ways.

Chapters vi and vii return to the city of Mosul and examine the social changes and the new élites created as a result of the urban growth of the city. This is done to great effect through the discussion of the material contained in Azdî’s Ta’rîkh on the massacres committed by the Abbasids in the city upon their conquest in 750. This material is rich in detail, which allows conclusions to be drawn about many aspects of life in Mosul. Unlike, for example, the material on massacres committed by the Abbasids on their conquest of Damascus, which is limited to a few remarks preserved by various historians, here we have accounts which describe these events, bringing in characters, actions and reactions. From these descriptions, the author has deduced many details of life on the eve of the Abbasid conquest. Thus we know more about the provincial city of Mosul at that time than we know about the capital city, Damascus.

Herein lies the strength of this book. The availability of a local history written by a native, and preserving local and contemporary accounts, allows the history of the city and its hinterland to be written. However, the work under review is not a rewriting of Azdî’s history for a modern readership. Instead it shows how much material extant from the Abbasid period on the post-conquest and Umayyad period can be made to yield if the conditions under which it was produced are understood. It seems, therefore, that the key is not to discard material that may seem incoherent and anachronistic, but to use it to piece together the history of the period which produced it. In this respect, the historiography of this book can be a useful model for historians of early Islam still searching for ways in which to interpret some of their non-contemporary literary material. For a history of post-conquest Jazîra and Mosul to the ninth century, this book is a definitive work especially on the social history of the region.

L. A. Asser

DAVID THOMAS (ed.):
Syrian Christians under Islam: the first thousand years.

One noteworthy feature of the current international crisis, where the relationship between ‘Christians’ and ‘Muslims’ is discussed, daily and incessantly in the media, is the lack of any interest whatsoever in the situation as it affects the long-established and often ancient Christian communities in the Middle East region. Only when shooting and shelling around the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, or in Beit Jala happens to become the focus of media attention does the very existence of these communities seem to matter to those who dream, plan and doodle in the search for some kind of ‘New World Order’.

Greater Syria is one geographical region where the two faiths have engaged
over many centuries in dialogue and controversy. The former and, to a degree, the latter, were particularly important and fruitful during the early centuries of Islam and during the days of the latter’s expansion, geographical, scholastic and theological. It is precisely these issues which are clarified in this book, a selection of papers from the Third Woodbrooke-Mingana Symposium on Arab Christianity and Islam (September 1998) on the theme of ‘Arab Christianity in Bilād al-Shām (Greater Syria) in the pre-Ottoman Period’. The content focuses on aspects of Syrian Christian life and thought during the first millennium of Islamic rule. The series of Symposia was held in Woodbrooke College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, a most appropriate venue, since the Iraqi priest Dr Alphonse Mingana (1878–1937), who had brought to Woodbrooke College an important collection of Syrian and Arabic Christian manuscripts, had temporarily lived there. His collection is referred to on p. 191 in a chapter by Lucy-Anne Hunt on leaves from an illustrated Syriac lectionary of the seventh/thirteenth century (pp. 185–202, including 12 figures).

The helpful introduction by the editor, David Thomas, gives an overall comment upon the content of the volume, serves to make a comprehensive assessment of what each contribution offers to the themes and goals of the Symposia, and indicates those which are most relevant to specialists in Oriental Christianity in the Fertile Crescent, and to Islamists. The Foreword, by Mor Gregorios Yuhanna Ibrahim, Syrian Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo, makes an impassioned plea on behalf of Middle Eastern Christians.

The eight essays within the volume can be divided into those which concentrate upon the structure, divisions and missions of the Oriental Christian churches of Syria during the Abbasid age and those which are immediately concerned with the problems which Islam, as a religion and a community of believers, presented to those Christians who, for centuries, had been established, widely accepted and were the fount of so much of the finest thought and culture which the Syrians had contributed over many centuries. Sidney Griffith’s chapter on the sectarian and Christological controversies in Arabic, in third/ninth century Syria, succinctly summarizes, yet at the same time adds to, a number of his articles which were published in his Arabic Christianity in the monasteries of ninth-century Palestine, Aldershot, 1992. In the latter work, about the Arabic account of ‘Abd al-Masiḥ al-Najrānī al-Ghassānī, is further examined, here, by a chapter devoted to the martyrdom of this superior of Mount Sinai, written by Mark W. Swanson (pp. 107–30). Seta B. Dadoyan’s chapter on the Armenians in Syria between the fourth/tenth and sixth/twelfth centuries (pp. 159–83) adds enormously to the general picture conveyed by Edmund Schütz in his ‘Armenia: a Christian enclave in the Islamic Near East in the Middle Ages’, in Michael Gervers and Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi (ed.) Conversion and continuity: indigenous Christian communities in Islamic lands, Toronto, 1990, pp. 217–36, reviewed in BSOAS LV/1, 128).

The contributions to the study of the relationships between Islamic and Christian dialogue and controversy are at the heart of this collection. The reality of this controversy, in this age, was highlighted by Sir T. W. Arnold in his The preaching of Islam (London, 1935). Speaking of the controversial dialogues with ‘Muhammadans’ undertaken by St. John of Damascus and by Bishop Theodore Abū Qurrah, Arnold quotes the bishop as saying, ‘The thoughts of the Agarenes and all their zeal, are directed towards the denial of the divinity of God the Word and they strain every effort to this end’. This, and related controversies and major differences, are thoroughly debated and clarified in Barbara Roggema’s, ‘A Christian reading of the Qur’an: the
Legend of Sergius—Baḥīrā and its use of Qurʾan and Sīra’ (pp. 57–74) and Samir K. Samir’s examination of the Prophet, as perceived by Timothy 1 and other Arab Christian authors (pp. 75–106). Relations at a personal level are examined by Lawrence Conrad on the writings of Ibn Butlān (pp. 131–58) and by David Thomas on Paul of Antioch’s Letter to a Muslim friend and the Risāla al-Qubrusiyya (pp. 203–22). All these contributions have a direct bearing on quranic studies. These contributions supplement, to a small degree, the general picture as is conveyed in such works as J. Spencer Trimingham’s Christianity among the Arabs in pre-Islamic times, (London and Beirut: Longman, 1979). The interpretation of the Quran in the light of the scriptures of the earlier Peoples of the Book is a subject which occurs on numerous pages and quotations in this volume. The publication is exemplary, crowned by a bibliography of eleven pages, including books and articles, on every aspect of the debates, citing examples from a wide range of European journals and also others published in Beirut, Cairo and Jerusalem, as well as in the United States. The index includes references from the Bible and the Quran. The spelling of proper names is consistent and carefully transliterated. Footnotes are printed at the foot of each page.

H. T. Norris

YAḤYA MI-Headers:
Ibn Sinā: Lettre au Vizir Abū Saʿīd.

This is in every way an excellent book. Michot has retrieved an important and interesting text which has long been unavailable. It deals with ibn Sinā’s attack on Abū l-Qāsim al-Kirmānī, the leading philosopher at the court of Abū Saʿīd al-Hamadhanī in Hamadhān, where ibn Sinā arrived in 405/1015. The text and translation are preceded by a discussion of the manuscript itself and a lengthy account of the wanderings of ibn Sinā around the time he wrote it; it gives a good deal of useful information about cultural life at the time, and the precise issues which were at stake between him and the established authority al-Kirmānī. One quickly builds up a picture of ibn Sinā as a young man in a hurry, eager to dazzle with his logical brilliance, and not frightened to demand of the vizier a ‘fetwa’ on several occasions! There are comprehensive indices and lists of terms and persons, and the translation is set against the Arabic text. This is a very attractively constructed volume, with occasional illustrations and calligraphy which enhances its value.

There is at least one discussion in the book about which readers may have qualms, and that is to do with the question of the so-called ‘oriental philosophy’ which has been such a controversial issue for so long in Islamic philosophy. Ibn Sinā scholars can be divided broadly into two camps. One group sees the contrast between Western and Eastern philosophy as a contrast between the peripatetic sort of philosophy which came from Greece and more mystical versions of philosophy which are often seen today, and certainly were then, to come from further east. Michot sides with the interpreters of ibn Sinā who see the Eastern/Western dichotomy as principally
geographical, with ‘Eastern’ referring to Bukhara and Khurasan, and ‘Western’ to Baghdad. When ibn Sinā refers to himself as an ‘Eastern’ philosopher he means that he is someone who has an accurate view of Aristotle and is able to develop Aristotle’s principles and techniques to arrive at a philosophical position which is both sound and also not slavishly restricted to older peripatetic thought. Al-Kirmānī is criticized for not even reaching the standard of understanding Aristotle properly, and the former’s views on physics and logic are dispatched with particular thoroughness in this letter. Al-Kirmānī is, then, a ‘Western’ philosopher of a particularly weak standard.

Michot devotes a lot of space to this issue, so it is not inappropriate to discuss it here. It should be said that he makes the thesis as plausible as it can be made, but it remains possible rather than plausible. He is certainly right to be rather concerned at the thesis that ibn Sinā is part of some shadowy Sufi movement which permeates Persian culture, and indeed philosophy itself, and which inevitably emerges in the thought of virtually every Islamic philosopher of the classical period. On the other hand, there is a close connection between most Islamic philosophers and mysticism, and it is not unreasonable to interpret those passages of ibn Sinā which are openly mystical as indeed mystical. Michot suggests that they might just be poetic, but someone who regards himself as an Aristotelian philosopher and who also uses poetic language is surely doing something very different from a standard Aristotelian thinker. Michot would no doubt say that what he is doing is being ‘Eastern’; he is not slavishly following Aristotle but moving on from him while remaining faithful to his basic principles. Why not take ibn Sinā at his word and see him as being mystical? Most Islamic philosophers were committed to some form of mysticism, and were also quite clear that this was a different form of intellectual (and not only intellectual) activity from peripatetic thought. Why not accept that ibn Sinā sought in his Eastern/Western dichotomy to characterize this familiar distinction in Islamic philosophy, one which by his time had already become fairly evident and which in following centuries became even more standard? Michot makes an excellent case to the contrary, but we should be careful before we accept his case, since there is a mass of evidence against it, only some of which he examines in his introduction.

I was very stimulated by this book, this is only one of the issues on which Michot has interesting things to say. He has moved ibn Sinā studies onto a new level.

OLIVER LEAMAN

OLIVER LEAMAN:
A brief introduction to Islamic philosophy.

Professor Leaman is the prolific author, editor and translator of some seventeen histories, anthologies and thematic volumes relating to the history of Islamic, Jewish and ‘Eastern’ (including Islamic) philosophical traditions, as well as more contemporary topics. In particular, he recently edited, together with S. H. Nasr, a massive two-volume History of Islamic philosophy
(Routledge, 1999) which provides what is certainly the most comprehensive survey to date of the many schools and traditions of Islamic philosophic and theological reflection. Against that background, the present volume consists of what can best be described as a series of short, condensed and highly personal essays on what the author judges to be of philosophic interest and value—usually as ‘philosophy’ is defined in today’s Anglo-American philosophy departments—in the debates and controversies of a wide range of earlier Islamic thinkers, with special attention to two key figures (Averroes and Maimonides) to whom he has devoted separate studies in the past.

Apart from a brief summary of essential historical and theological background, the author’s meditations are arranged in a series of seven discrete chapters (on knowledge, mysticism, ontology, ethics, politics, the question of transmission, and language), usually focusing on one or two relevant controversies from very different historical and philosophical contexts in each case, and frequently highlighting as well the contemporary Islamic relevance of the issues and approaches in question. While this approach may serve to interest and motivate particularly bright and inquiring students previously unacquainted with Islamic philosophy, most of the discussions in fact presuppose a high level of familiarity with a wide range of Islamic (and Western) philosophical and theological traditions and their very different historical contexts. Indeed the overall impression is of a philosopher (much more than a historian of philosophy) seriously attempting to engage other philosophers and thinkers in constructive, thoughtful discussion of issues which remain particularly central in the political, ethical and theological contexts of contemporary Islamic intellectual life. Given the rarity of such creative efforts to bridge and connect what have too often remained isolated, highly specialized fields of scholarship and discourse, the author must surely be acknowledged for this independent, informed and often revealingly personal effort to, in the words of Henry Corbin, ‘bring Islamic philosophy out of the ghetto of Orientalism’. While other specialists in this field will no doubt supply a long list of thinkers, discussions and different approaches that could or should have been included in each chapter, they will also recognize the implicit challenges—and potentially fruitful further discussions—posed by each of these avowedly introductory topical essays.

The preface to this work, in a revealing reflection on the author’s own intellectual itinerary, suggests that this study might be read as a sort of far-reaching correction to the once standard scholarly conception of the ‘history of Islamic philosophy’ as consisting above all of the ‘transmission’ of Greek philosophy (and especially Aristotle) from the Hellenistic world to medieval Latin scholasticism. Readers of these essays, even those who might strongly disagree with the author’s own particular selections and philosophic perspectives, cannot help but be struck by how radically that broader conception of the subject has changed over the past quarter-century, in at least two key respects. First, this introduction gives serious consideration to the ongoing, diverse and highly sophisticated traditions of Islamic philosophy from throughout the ‘Eastern’ Islamic world, which are still vigorously flourishing especially in modern Iran. Secondly, the author constantly refers to the relevance of his chosen philosophical (and theologico-political) controversies to ongoing political, social, and scientific debates that increasingly engage Muslims—and unavoidably, as current events remind us, their neighbours as well—on a truly global scale. Professor Leaman’s omission of both ‘history’ and ‘medieval’ in his most recent title on this subject is certainly no accident.

JAMES W. MORRIS
ISSA J. BOULLATA (ed.):
Literary structures of religious meaning in the Qur’an.

This volume, consisting of fifteen articles, impressively sets out to resolve the intricate interplay between literary structures of the Quran and religious meaning embedded in these structures. Not only is emphasis placed upon determining how fittingly literary devices project the religious dimension of the Quran’s discourse, but the volume explores aesthetic perception of the holy text. The volume’s editor, Issa Boullata, states that not all methods of literary criticism are encompassed in the various analyses and also asserts that issues relating to the historicity and canonical status of the Quran are not the concern of this work; however, it is evident that a number of the articles included in this collection have clear implications for the discussion of the Quran’s textual integrity, as we shall see.

The first section tackles form, meaning, and textual structure in the Quran, beginning with Sells’ study of aural intertextuality in early Meccan revelation. This extends a concept that quranic chapters are not semantically sealed units, applying it to the realm of acoustics. Sells explains that sound functions as the principal instrument cogently conveying the ‘spirit’ of the text in all its religious connotations; and, correspondingly, that this spirit transcends the strictures of temporality perceived in scriptural language. Sells adds that while classical scholarship expounded upon the doctrine of the Quran’s inimitability, scant attention was paid to the subtle interaction between sound and meaning. It must be said, however, that identifying the perceived effect of aural contingencies in these contexts remains a relatively subjective endeavour.

Zahniser examines unity and coherence in Medinan chapters of the Quran. This chapter is concerned with characteristic coherence and cohesion underpinning the Quran’s themes and meaning. The author reflects upon the concept of thematic coherence in the Quran as developed by figures such as Islahi, Mir and Robinson, circumscribing major transitions and borders in respect of themes of revelation as exemplified in two Medinan chapters: Q.2 and Q.4. The lack of thematic unity perfunctorily assumed of Medinan chapters is re-assessed: the suggestion is that a presumption of unity and coherence in an approach to the lengthy Medinan chapters might yield significant findings.

McAullife explores the hermeneutic implications of the classical approach to the muhkmam-mutashābih designation of quranic verses with a view to ‘constructing bridges between medieval commentaries and contemporary theories’. She presents a fascinating piece of research which skillfully charts the way in which this antithetical mechanism predicated approaches to exegesis of the Quran; correspondingly, she argues that it is pertinent to resort to intratextuality in the endeavour to unravel the language of scripture, especially the professedly ambiguous mutashābihāt and the religious imagery which such verses have the power ‘to persuade, to influence, to transform’. It is intriguing to note that scholars who subscribed to the view that the Quran did comprise mutashābihāt: verses whose import was unfathomable, implausibly proceeded to offer a plethora of exegetical expositions on the same verses. And thus in many ways a distinction in the designation of verses remained abstract.

Welch’s in-depth analysis of the formulaic features of the so-called punishment stories propounds the view that these stories were steadily
developed from a repository of ‘key terms, phrases, and formulas’. He argues that the essentially oral nature of these stories along with their being consciously adapted with audience, time, and location in mind, indicates that the boundaries of scripture were seemingly fluid during the Prophet’s own lifetime. Such a view does impinge upon the canonical status of the Quran, although Welch suggests that his conclusion ‘is not inconsistent with statements in the Quran or with traditional Islamic teachings’.

The last two articles in this part are by Rippin and Shahid: Rippin deals with quranic symbolism of personal responsibility as signified by the quranic expression: ‘Desiring the face (wjh) of God’. The article places the quranic contribution to religious discourse on monotheism firmly within the confines of the Near East: the imagery conjured up by quranic dicta belongs to the ancient heritage of that region, although such imagery is further shaped by the theological tenets of the new faith. Shahid’s contribution takes us back to the realm of mutashabihat. He pursues an intriguing hypothesis regarding the mysterious letters of the Quran (al-huruf al-muqatta’a) and their link with the doctrine of the Quran’s inimitability. Shahid premises his argument on his exposition of Q.73. It is somewhat convoluted by his assertion that the Prophet’s state of mind influenced the way these mysterious letters were perceived, which leads him to conclude that they were an intrinsic component of revelation, albeit in an unintelligible form. It would seem that such a hypothesis does not relate specifically to the meaningfulness and linguistic marvel of the letters per se, but rather to the supposed reasons for their so-called ‘unintelligible’ nature.

The second section of this volume deals with literary approaches to selected chapters of the Quran. Neuwirth chooses to re-examine the canonization of the Quran with a view to exploring the implications of this process for the text itself. Reflecting upon the thesis of Wansbrough, along with the notion that the religious consciousness of a community looms large in the processes of canonization, Neuwirth examines the historical accounts of the emergence of a textus receptus ne varietur: the resultant ‘heterogenous ensemble’ and the fact that ‘genuine text units had lost their literary integrity’ could be used to reconstruct, or at least identify, the nucleus of scripture around which the text crystallizes; this, she suggests, could be resolved by applying self-referentiality and textuality; she uses Sūrat al-Hijr to illustrate her postulate. The chapter seemingly exhibits ‘organic growth out of a nucleus of preceding texts’ and it intimates the emergence of a community. It must be said that just how one ascertains definitively the chronological precedence of the segments of revelation from which the core of the sūra is putatively derived is critical to the whole thesis.

Mir analyses the theme of irony in Sūrat Yūsuf as a literary device, and argues that an objective approach to the Quran as literature was effectively impeded by the classical doctrine on Tjāz al-Qur’ān: this doctrine was anchored to a theological as opposed to a literary viewpoint, obscuring attempts to clarify the Quran’s rhetorical beauty and achieve a greater understanding of its content. Having made the case for the ‘organic coherence’ of this chapter, the question is posed as to whether the device of irony is a stylistic instrument found in other chapters of the Quran.

It is Sūrat al-Furqān which forms the basis of Johns’s literary ‘exploration’ of its dynamics and spirituality. He offers a perceptive study of the chapter, taking into account a classical appreciation of the aesthetic nature of the text through the discipline of balāgha, highlighting, for example, the dramatic effect of grammatical shift and other rhetorical devices (intriguingly, Johns
identifies a strong element of dramatic irony in the chapter). Indeed, also central to Johns’s evaluation of the literary power of the chapter is Muqatil Ibn Sulaymān’s *tafsīr* which, along with the *sīra* literature, pivotally supplies a framework for referencing verses of scripture. Johns believes that the chapter’s reference points are interfaced with the entire quranic canon.

The final contribution in this section returns to the theme of the aural dimension of scripture, complementing Sells’ opening chapter. However, Hajjaji-Jarrah examines the enchantment of reading *Surat al-Adiyāt* and reflects upon the rhetorical impact of the Quran as an ‘auditory experience’ and the sheer effectiveness of the powerful imagery created by this chapter’s verses. She remarks that while early quranic revelation bore similarities in structure to the rhythmic prose or *saj*, it actually challenged conventions from both literary and theological standpoints: these were conventions revered by the Arabs. Hajjaji-Jarrah argues that it is the orchestration of the dynamics of sound which the *sīra* employs with immense rhetorical effect.

The final section of this volume takes literary appreciation of the Quran as its principal theme and begins with an article by Kermani assessing the aesthetic reception of the Quran, specifically during the Prophet’s lifetime. Making a convincing point that fascination with and reverence for the holy text were axiomatic in early Muslim interpretations, Kermani argues that this has not been sufficiently reflected in recent academic studies. It is worth noting that much of the material Kermani adduces to illustrate the various arguments might be dismissed as emerging from the subjective processes of projection in salvation history; however, he argues that one needs to consider cultural factors which further substantiate the worth of this source material.

Rahman investigates the phenomenon of ellipsis (hadjhf) in the Quran, probing Ibn Qutayba’s definition of this linguistic feature as exemplified in scripture. He also considers the relationship between hadhīf and a developing theory of majāz, proffering an understanding of ellipsis in its early literary context and illustrating how Ibn Qutayba’s analysis of hadhīf was gradually worked into the texture of arguments on the Quran’s inimitability. Rahman examines the importance of a literary device, which, in classical scholarship, distinguished the linguistic superiority of the quranic diction.

Al-Sharīf al-Radī’s contributions to exegesis and the early development of literary approaches to the Quran are reviewed by Ayoub, who sketches the cultural milieu which influenced the theological and literary outlook of this figure. It is the exposition of metaphorical and figurative expressions of the Quran which forms the focus of this study: al-Sharīf composed one of the first complete studies of metaphor in the Quran. Ayoub emphasizes the theological tenets which governed al-Sharīf’s literary analysis, particularly where metaphor is used to obviate the anthropomorphic imagery of scripture. The article also examines an extant volume of al-Sharīf’s seemingly extensive commentary of *mutashābihāt* verses entitled *Haqā’iq al-ta’wil fī mutashābih al-tanzil*.

Al-Sharīf al-Radī also features prominently in Abu-Deeb’s discerning study of majāz and metaphorical language of the Quran. This chapter examines the literary theory of majāz as traced in the work of the early Basrani philologist Abū ‘Ubayda, concluding that in this early work majāz was not linked to a developed concept of metaphor. Abu-Deeb ponders the theological provenance of this term and then proceeds to assess al-Sharīf’s exposition of majāz and isti‘āra as exemplified in both scripture and the prophetic traditions, reviewing his *Talkhīs al-bayān fī majāz al-Qur’ān* and *al-Majāzāt al-nabawīyya*. The author astutely reveals how the concept of metaphor was applied by
al-Sharif to resolve the language of scripture from both literary and theological perspectives. Abu-Deeb countenances the view that an adherence to linguistic conventions established by generations of scholars hindered attempts to harness the potential of ‘inventiveness and creativity’ inherent in the language of the Quran.

The final contribution to this volume is by its editor, Boullata, who assesses Sayyid Qutb’s literary appreciation of the Quran as outlined in two of his works, al-Taswir al-fannī fīl-Qur‘ān and Fī zīāl al-Qur‘ān. Boullata probes Qutb’s efforts to identify rhetorical devices crucial in prefiguring the spirituality of the Quran’s message. Recalling Qutb’s dissatisfaction with classical attempts to sense the real compass of the Quran’s artistic beauty (the notion here is that i‘jāz discussions had seemingly impaired the focus of classical scholarship—this is an argument raised in several of the articles in this volume), Boullata introduces a number of literary devices recognized by Qutb as instruments which convey religious motifs in a vivid and imaginative way. It was this linguistic artistry which was an attraction to the early Arabs; and, examining the language of the Quran through such literary devices and features, it is suggested that the unity and coherence of the text become all the more apparent.

It is commendable that the typographical errors are minimal: definition p. 59; und p. 155.

The volume represents a valuable contribution to quranic studies. The accentuation of the critical function of the Quran’s literary elements reveals just how effectively literary components projected theological, exegetical, and historical dimensions of the text. Moreover, this selection of articles allows an appreciation of the extent to which the linguistic features and conventions of the Quran inexorably influenced classical Islamic scholarship.

MUSTAFA SHAH

MARTIN KRAMER (ed.):
The Jewish discovery of Islam: studies in honor of Bernard Lewis.

In the concluding pages of his rewardingly full editorial introduction to this Festschrift volume, Kramer firmly sites Bernard Lewis, for so long and so powerfully associated with the SOAS History Department, at the end of that great period of over one hundred years when European Jews played such a key role in the interpretation of Islam in the West, seeing the date of his departure for Princeton in 1974 (four years before the first appearance of Orientalism) as indicating the final shift to North America of the centre of gravity of Western Islamic studies.

As Kramer shows with broad reference to the chapters on individual figures contributed to this book, the Jewish participation in this great project was associated with a variety of complex broader cultural phenomena often coming into unforeseen conflicts with one another, as the coincidence of Jewish emancipation with the European re-discovery of the Islamic East gave Jewish scholarship a leading part to play in encouraging what he calls (p. 43) ‘a European respect for peoples bearing cultures of extra-European origin, precisely because the Jews were the most vulnerable of these peoples, residing
as they did in the very center of Europe’, but ‘paradoxically, while Europe gradually assimilated this approach to Islam, it often declined to assimilate its Jewish bearers’, leading ultimately to the tragic destructions and dispersions of the Nazi period.

Within their chronological arrangement the contributions to the volume are varied in style and approach as well as in their subjects, which include a number of interesting and unusual figures as well as mainstream representatives of the high academic tradition. The complex attitudes of one unusually interesting English Jew to his own Jewish identity and to the Jewish presence in the Middle East are explored in Minna Rozen’s opening treatment of Disraeli’s fictional and other writings, which is followed by Benjamin Braude’s account of an even more extraordinary Englishman of Jewish descent, the sometime Jesuit and secret agent W. G. Palgrave.

While Jacob Landau’s brief notice of Vâmbéry hardly does more than draw attention to the latter’s Jewish origin, Jacob Lassner’s substantial chapter on Geiger focuses particularly upon the remarkable achievement of that great Judaic scholar’s early thesis on Judaism and Islam. The greatest Jewish Islamicist of them all is the subject of the next substantial chapter by Lawrence Conrad, who prefaces his study of Goldziher’s attitudes to Ernest Renan by taking the opportunity to correct Said’s quite misleading portrayal of Orientalism as a project mainly, if not exclusively, dominated by the British and the French.

Moving to the twentieth century, Joel Kraemer’s full length contribution traces the tragic life of the brilliant Paul Kraus from Prague to Berlin before he was driven first to a remarkable association with Massignon in Paris, thence to exile and to suicide in wartime Cairo. Martin Kramer then portrays the convoluted career of Muhammad Asad, famous as the author of The road to Mecca, from his birth in Galicia as Leopold Weiss, through his intimate association with Ibn Saud, then across several continents to Pakistan, New York and Geneva.

A worthy tribute to its honorand, this most interesting book ends with three shorter chapters, each like all those in the volume provided with full sets of footnotes containing all sorts of suggestive bibliographic listings: on the transplantation of German Islamic scholarship to Israel, by Hava Lazarus-Yafeh; on the interaction of Judaic and Islamic studies in the work of Samuel Stern, by Shulamit Sela; and on Lévi-Provençal and the historiography of Iberian Islam, by David Wasserstein.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE


It is a well-known fact that medieval urbanism and urbanity in the Mediterranean are, to a large extent, urban developments of Arab origin and stamp—and that these urban centres were those of international trade and commerce, of science and art and, last but not least, important political capitals of military and religious powers. It is equally well-known that most of these urban centres and their architectural, socio-economic and political
histories have been thoroughly investigated and published by both Arab and Western historians. So why another book on the medieval megalopoles of the Mediterranean realm under Arab influence?

The approach and purpose of this publication is clearly a different one: it is a comparative study based on the extensive and detailed research of individual cities and cityscapes of the Arab-medieval world already in existence. The ultimate aim and goal of this book, therefore, is to identify commonalities in and identities of this specific urbanism and urbanity. This intention and purpose is reflected in the arrangement of the texts.

The book begins with a short, but precise, discussion by Thierry Bianquis of the concept of a ‘megalopolis’ in a historical perspective and its specific role and function in the medieval Arab context by Jean-Claude Garcin. He argues that size, population and cosmopolitanism in all its different aspects can be considered as criteria for the megalopolis concept. At the same time, however, he points to the fact that those cities considered to be megalopoles—Damascus, Kairouan, Baghdad, Cordoba, Fustat, Aleppo, Cairo under the Mamluks, Fès and Tunis—never formed a simultaneous urban network, but must be seen as a sequence in time and space. In line with its comparative approach, the introduction is complemented by extensive bibliographies on those cities listed above (pp. 13–35) as the basis for the case studies which follow and as an invitation to additional reading.

The comparative approach of the book becomes clearer still in the very schematic representation of the urban histories: starting with some general remarks on the overall historic importance of the specific city and its perception among medieval Arab travellers, historians and geographers, each of the aforementioned megalopoles is analysed with regard to quantitative reconstructions of its spatial size and number of inhabitants, the ethnic and/or religious composition and distribution of its population, the urban morphology and architectural design, its population, its political functions, administration, infrastructure and services, the city-hinterland relationships, religious and cultural institutions and—finally—its specific identity as seen by its citizens and by outsiders. The case studies themselves are analysed by proven experts: Damascus by Thierry Bianquis, Kairouan by Mondher Sakly, Baghdad by Françoise Miecheau and—for the period of its foundation until the beginning of the tenth century—by Abdallah Cheikh-Moussa, Cordoba by Manuel Acien Almansa and Antonio Vallejo Triano, Fatimid Fustat/Cairo by Ayman Fu’ad Sayyed and Roland-Pierre Gayraud, Aleppo by Anne-Marie Edde, post-Fatimid Cairo by Doris Behrens-Abouseif, Sylvie Denoix and Jean-Claude Garcin, Fès by Halima Ferhat and Tunis by Mounira Chapoutot-Remadi, a truly impressive list of competent urban historians and experts on medieval Arab urbanism and urbanity.

In line with the editors’ initial statement, according to which the purpose of this book is to present ‘un ensemble d’études comparées des très grandes villes de Méditerranée qui ont joué un rôle exceptionnel dans l’histoire’ (p. 1), the concluding summary (pp. 263–308) as well as J.-Cl. Garcin’s conclusions (pp. 309–17) seem to support the hypothesis of a much greater range of urban morphologies and diversities than hitherto anticipated and postulated in Western scholarship. Such observations hold true not only in regard to the concept of the ‘Islamic city’, but also and likewise in regard to changes in urban functions and functional differentiations within cities over time and space. Some of the above-mentioned case studies prove that, in the course of history, considerable locational changes of citadels and other political institutions, as well as relocations of grand mosques, have instigated both
urban renewal and new functional differentiations within many of the case studies. These—and other findings—become especially apparent in the summarizing comparison of those aforementioned criteria of the megalopolis-concept, where, more than once, ‘exceptions to the rule’ seem to prevail. This, however, is to be expected in a comparative study which covers the huge area between Baghdad in the east and Fès in the west, and a time span of more than five centuries.

This book, although it adds no new insights into individual city-histories, is nevertheless an inspiring and thought-provoking publication. It contributes to our understanding of the very essence of Arab urbanism and urbanity in Medieval times—and it promotes our understanding that each individual city, although part of the stereotypical ‘Islamic’ or ‘Arab’ city, has its own characteristics. The book contains a small atlas with twenty-two mostly coloured maps and some statistics as well as a short list of definitions of Arab terms (pp. 319–23) relevant to the case studies presented. All in all it is a welcome addition to the large number of excellent urban histories of the medieval Mediterranean realm, especially because of its innovative comparative approach.

ECKART EHLERS

YOAV GELBER:
Palestine 1948: war, escape and the emergence of the Palestinian refugee problem.
£45.

This book represents yet another foray into the events surrounding the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Yoav Gelber notes in his acknowledgements that this work is derived from a study of Israeli intelligence in the 1948 war. Indeed, this reviewer understands that the author has written the official history of Israeli intelligence covering 1948, which has been embargoed by the Israeli Ministry of Defence on the grounds of security. We can assume that this book is based on his findings.

Whatever the origins of this book, the author sets out his stall regarding his interpretation of these events by arguing that the ‘new historians’, that is scholars such as Benny Morris, Ilan Pappe and Avi Shlaim, are ‘particularly irritating’ (p. 2) because they have not brought about any scholarly breakthroughs, or revealed new approaches to the study of the 1948 war. While this point is debatable, there can be little doubt that Gelber has little to add either. This is because he could have used this opportunity to challenge his opponents on a number of important historiographical questions. This he fails to do. Indeed, Gelber only makes passing reference to this corpus of scholarship in his numerous footnotes.

The author could have used his considerable knowledge of the Israeli archives, especially the Israel Defence Forces Archives (IDFA), to great effect. In reality he has produced a highly detailed military history that will be of interest to a limited audience. Indeed, this book is long on detail and short on analysis. In light of his long-standing work on the origins and evolution of the Israeli intelligence community, it would have been of great interest to see what Gelber had to say about the role and value of intelligence in this conflict.
As far as Gelber is concerned, Israel’s victory in the 1948 war was inevitable because of its superiority in personnel, equipment and organization. This argument seems to be based on the benefit of hindsight. The overwhelming impression the researcher gets from analysing the contemporary documentation is that the Zionist/Israeli leadership could not have been sure about the war’s outcome. As a military historian, the author must be well aware that there is no such thing as certainty in warfare. The fact that the Jews faced the combined military strength of the neighbouring Arab states must have been unsettling.

The author shows quite clearly that the Israeli leadership received confused and contradictory assessments from its intelligence arm about the organization and manpower of the Palestinians, their likely strategy, and the precise role of the Arab states. On the latter point Zionist intelligence faced (as did the British) the problem that the Arab states did not categorically make up their minds to invade Palestine until the end of April 1948. Thus, it was very difficult to reach concrete conclusions about their intentions.

Although Gelber goes into considerable detail concerning the relative military strengths of both sides, he adds little to our existing knowledge of these events. Moreover, he makes little attempt to explore the influence on Israeli decision makers concerning the application of the 1948 Anglo-Transjordan treaty to the West Bank. Although there is prima facie evidence that Ben-Gurion and the military leadership had every intention of attacking the West Bank, they could not be certain that such an operation would not lead to King Abdullah invoking the treaty which required the British to come to his assistance.

In light of Gelber’s earlier research, it must be regarded a serious failing that he does not place more emphasis on the wider diplomatic and strategic influences on the course of the war. For example, he makes little mention of the Jewish Agency’s contacts with King Abdullah prior to the onset of the war. On this point there are a number of significant questions, which he simply ignores. By failing to address such significant issues as to whether or not there was a pre-conceived plan between the Jewish Agency and King Abdullah to carve up Palestine at the expense of the Palestinians, and the influence of American and British policy, Gelber fails to provide a rounded account.

One of the most contentious aspects of the 1948 war has been the question of the exodus of between 520,000 and 630,000 Palestinians. Gelber robustly rejects the argument that prior to the end of the mandate the Zionist leadership adopted a deliberate policy of expelling the ‘escapees’. Nonetheless, it is widely thought that the massacre at Deir Yassin in April 1948 acted as a catalyst for a massive haemorrhaging of the Palestinian population. He shows that the Israeli leadership was less interested in its causes, than in how to prevent the refugees’ return. This, as Gelber shows, was achieved by either demolishing refugee villages, or by settling Jewish immigrants in their homes. Ultimately the Israeli government of the time adopted a policy of ‘no return before peace’ (p. 291). They argued that the refugees should instead be resettled in the neighbouring states. Gelber concludes with the following argument: ‘unless Israel is willing to commit demographic suicide it is difficult to see how the problem will be solved’ (p. 301). As far as Gelber is concerned, the Palestinian refugee question will only be solved by the de facto recognition by the Palestinians that they will never return, and that they can only be resettled in the Arab states.

Although Gelber is to be commended for using a wealth of archival
material, this book suffers from a number of inherent flaws. In the first instance, there are numerous stylistic infelicities. This point is borne out by various misspellings of names, for example Troutbeck for the author’s Troutbek. Given that Gelber goes into considerable detail on operational matters, the provision of three general maps (one of the UN partition plan for Palestine, a second of Arab invasion plans and a third describing the Jewish perception of these plans) is high unsatisfactory. Finally, the absence of a bibliography is quite unbelievable.

TANCRED BRADSHAW

MONIKA FATIMA MÜHLBÖCK and WALTER BELTZ (ed.):

This volume contains a collection of six articles in English and German on the smaller Gulf states—Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. Some of the contributions deal also with Saudi Arabia. The smaller Gulf states have long been the scholarly realm of political scientists, military strategists, oil economists and the like, so a collection dealing with the whole range of recent socio-economic, legal, constitutional, literary and cultural developments in these states is long overdue. However, this collection will only partly fill the gap.

Jerzy Zdanowski (in English) examines the emergence of Saudi Arabia as a regional power in the Gulf in the first half of the twentieth century. In the style of traditional diplomatic history, he adds substantially to our knowledge of Saudi-Gulf relations. However, Zdanowski’s depiction of internal developments and their inter-relation with diplomacy and war remains deficient. He still seems to subscribe to the standard narrative of the emergence of Saudi Arabia. According to his admirers, Ibn Saud acted as the founder-hero of the kingdom and only by making use of his superior personal qualities, created the Third Saudi State. In recent years, however, some authors have begun to challenge this narrative by highlighting the influence of different social strata, socio-economic structures and regional as well as international conflicts on the emergence of Saudi Arabia, so that Ibn Saud’s personal role should be seen as only one factor in this process.

Monika F. Mühlböck (in German) gives an overview of internal and constitutional developments in Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait during the twentieth century. Although the article would have benefited from the inclusion of more analysis and less emphasis on chronologic facts, it contains valuable first-hand information, especially about Shiites in the aforementioned countries. In particular the part on internal developments in Bahrain during the 1990s is extremely useful.

Hans-Georg Ebert’s article (in German) deals with recent developments of the legal systems of the GCC-states. After summarizing the legal and constitutional characteristics of the Arab Gulf states he focuses his discussion of family and inheritance law on the Omani personal status law of 1997. Ebert identifies the duality of secular and religious sectors in the administration of justice and the continuing influence of traditional religious scholars on law and justice as one of the most important characteristics of the Gulf states’ legal systems.
Fred Scholz (in German) discusses socio-economic change in the smaller Gulf states during the last thirty years. His article consists largely of a summary of his former publications and a fairly comprehensive survey of the present situation. Particularly interesting are his short case studies of social and economic phenomena, mainly drawn from Oman, one of Scholz’s main fields of study. His remarks on the settlement of the bedouin and its socio-economic implications reflect his research in this field, which might prove to be of crucial importance for the future of the Gulf states.

Barbara Michalak-Pikulska’s article on literary developments in the Gulf states concentrates on contemporary prose since the end of the 1920s, when this genre emerged in the Gulf states. She gives a deep insight into this hitherto neglected field of cultural activity in the region. However, the piece lacks comment on the reception of this kind of literature. Such comments would have been of interest to a broad readership, and not just specialists, trying to come to a better understanding of Gulf societies.

Dionisius Albertus Agius examines the different types of ships commonly called dhows and the linguistic origin of their different denominations. His article is replete with information on trade and maritime material culture in the Persian Gulf region during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This article reflects a more recent trend in Western scholarship, namely the study of Gulf history from the perspective of its integration into the economy and culture of the Indian Ocean rather than as the history of a periphery of the Middle East.

Although some of the contributions mentioned are of high quality, the collection as such suffers from serious shortcomings. First and foremost, the editors did not think it necessary to provide the reader with an introduction to the subject. Rather, the foreword, of just a few sentences, tries to explain (with only partial success) the puzzling title of the book (‘Gulf game in the 20th century’). It becomes clear from the articles selected that the intention is to present an overview of recent political, socio-economic and cultural developments, especially in the smaller Gulf states. If this was the case, however, the book would have benefited from an article about religious trends. Ebert’s short hints are useful, albeit sometimes incorrect. Besides, remarks about the Shiites in the various contributions—with the exception of Mühlböck’s article—are sketchy and sometimes unreliable. Shiite opposition movements in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain have recently reached understandings with their respective governments. By ignoring these events, the editors have neglected an important aspect of recent Gulf history. Furthermore, an overarching conceptualization might have enhanced the value of the book. At the end of the volume, the reader might wonder about the significance of all the data collected and what the common denominator of articles on such different topics as modern prose and traditional shipbuilding is.

GUIDO STEINBERG

DEVIN DEWEES (ed.):
_Studies on Central Asian history in honor of Yuri Bregel._

This book is a Festschrift in honour of Professor (Emeritus) Yuri Bregel, a distinguished authority and a ceaseless pioneer in Central Asian Studies,
especially its medieval history and the society of its varied peoples. The introduction, by Devin DeWeese, contains a short biography. The distress suffered by Bregel and his family in the early 1970s led to his exile in Israel and to his appointment to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He was one of the Jewish ‘refuseniks’ in the 1970s and 1980s. His case was raised at the 1973 meeting of the International Congress of Orientalists, held in Paris, and during the course of Western protests in regard to his application to emigrate, his case was raised specifically by Professor Bernard Lewis and Professor J. D. Pearson, both of whom had been leading figures in the life of SOAS. A list of Bregel’s publications is to be found in this book (pp. 11–20) and one is struck by his prolific contribution in terms of his articles for the Encyclopaedia of Islam (thirteen in all) and for the Encyclopaedia Iranica (sixteen in all).

The Festschrift comprises twelve essays on a varied selection of topics reflecting the expertise of the contributors. They are linked by a common enthusiasm for Central Asia and they range widely within the fields of financial, legal, religious, scholarly and social history. In several, linguistic topics are to the fore. Contributions vary in length, but the quality is of a consistently high standard. The first contribution on the subject of Bukhara, its name, site and meaning (pp. 21–5), is a lengthy note rather than an article, although it serves well as an opening topic since the city is to appear frequently in the book. Peter B. Golden’s ‘The terminology of slavery and servitude in medieval Turkic’ (pp. 27–56) is a well knit study of the linguistic and the historical as well as being of help to anthropologists concerned with past societies in Central Asia. Beatrice Forbes Manz’s ‘Family and ruler in Timurid historiography’ (pp. 57–78) discusses, amongst other topics, the legitimation programme of Timurid historical writing. Maria Eva Subtelny’s article on ‘Scholars and libraries in medieval Bukhara (with particular reference to the library of Khwāja Muhammad Pārsā)’ (pp. 79–111) is amongst the longest contributions. It includes a Deed of Endowment of the library in question and a photo of a part of it (from the Central State Archive of Uzbekistan) on p. 95. Jo-Ann Gross’s article on Naqshabandi appeals to the Herat Court (pp. 113–28) will be of undoubted value to those with a special interest in this brotherhood and in the legacy of Khwāja Ahrār. Elena A. Davidovich’s length essay (pp. 129–85) is one of two by Muscovites. The second is by G. E. Markov on ‘The social structure of the nomads of Asia and Africa’ (pp. 319–40). Davidovich’s ‘The monetary reform of Muḥammad Shaibānī Khān (in 913–914/1507–08)’ (pp. 129–85), is accompanied by figures and tables which illustrate countermarks on coins, tenth-century copper dirhams, silver and gold coins, with mints and dates, weights, and cartouche inscriptions. There is new archaeological evidence, all of it of interest to numismatists and to specialists in Central Asian Islamic art and archaeology. Another contribution, of both archaeological and historical interest, is R. D. McChesney’s piece on the Vāqfīyya of 947/1540 and the reconstruction of Balkh. Drawings of quarters and building plots and tables of Balkh property owners are included, as well as a facsimile of the Vāqfīyya from the archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan, which is translated on pp. 202–27. Two of the remaining articles, that on the presence of Sayyid Āṭa in Khwārazm (pp. 245–81) and ‘A Sufi history of Astrakhan’ (pp. 297–317), are closely linked to substantial studies which have already been presented and reviewed in the Bulletin. Sayyid Āṭa (‘Āṭā’), figures in DeWeese’s Islamization and native religion in the Golden Horde, Baba Türkës and conversion to Islam in historical and epical tradition, Pennsylvania, 1994 and
Allen J. Frank’s contribution on Jahānshāh’s Ṭārīkh-i Astarkhān is already referred to on p. 159 of his Islamic historiography and ‘Bulghar’ identity among the Tatars and Bashkirs of Russia, Brill, Leiden, 1998, (reviewed in BSOAS 63/1, p. 133). This article may be called a ‘younger brother’ of that major work. Saints and shrines of Astrakhan province are catalogued, and this work contrasts with and complements Muhammad Murād Ramžī’s, Ṭarfīq al-Akhhār (Orenburg, 1908, published a year later than Ṭārīkh-i Astarkhān). Jahānshāh’s work is characterized by a marked preference for the Qazaqs to the Polish/Lithuanian/Belorussian Tatars. ‘He contrasts the model Islamic piety and behavior of the Qazaqs with the illiteracy and ignorance of things Muslim among the Polish Tatars, in effect reversing the modernist view that admired the Europeanness of the assimilated Polish Tatars and decried the “savagery” and alleged semi-animism of the Qazaq nomads’ (p. 905). Whatever the situation may have been in the nineteenth century (Tamara Bairauskaite’s, Lietuvos Totoriai, XIX amžiuje, Vilnius, 1996, reviewed in BSOAS 61/1, 1998, p. 146, furnishes an infinitely more objective and better documented assessment than does Jahānshāh), it is clear from the surviving kitābs and Tatar Qurans of the eighteenth century, the close ties with the Crimea, with Aqquerman and the Ottoman Empire, that Jahānshāh’s opinions, as well as Ramžī’s in Daghestan (evident from the documents) is evidence for another side to the coin. Like Ramžī, Jahānshāh maintains that ‘We Russian Muslims have been given the name Tatar, suggesting that “a:lims viewed national designations such as “Tatar” as originating outside their community, and hence as essentially foreign’ (p. 317). This may have inspired much of his contempt for Islam in Poland, as he perceived it to be.

This book may not equal the format of, say, a number of the Variorum publications. However, it is well printed, accurate in its transcription and very well footnoted, where the bibliography may be found. There is no index of any kind.

H. T. Norris

YASIR SULEIMAN:

The Arabic grammatical tradition: a study in ta’il.


Suleiman makes it clear in the preamble to this book that Classical Arabic ‘illa can be translated by a variety of terms, among which are ‘cause’, ‘reason’, ‘rule’, ‘norm’, etc. (p. 1). The second form masdar from this geminated root, ta’il, the major subject of this volume, can thus be translated as ‘explanation’, ‘rationalization’, and/or ‘justification’ (p. 223). A good example of ta’il is provided by the author when he cites the eighth-century grammarian, Abū ’Amr Ibn al-‘Alā (770 A.D.), who while discussing an exception to a grammatical rule (hukm) cites the lack of grammatical agreement in a Yemeni informant’s saying jā’athu kitābī ‘my letter reached him’. His explanation for this is that since a synonym šahīfa, which is feminine, could be substituted for kitāb (masculine), the sentence is still to be regarded as grammatical. This is known as alhāml ‘alā almā’nā ‘semantic approximation’ (p. 79) or ‘interpretation’ (p. 220). After explaining the concept of ta’il and how it fits into the overall Arabic grammatical tradition, the bulk of the research examines how ta’il was conceived of by five major Arab grammarians: al-Zajjāj (948 A.D.), Ibn Jinnī (1002 A.D.), al-Anbārī...
Let us now consider one of the work’s most important chapters: the one which examines ta’lil in the larger framework of ‘usūl al-nahw ‘the principles of grammar’ (pp. 15–42). The concept of samā‘ ‘attested data’ is an interesting one; this word for ‘corpus’ makes direct reference to spoken data or ‘heard’ data (<samī‘a ‘to hear’). Suleiman is correct to emphasize the Qur'an's position as the major corpus (pp. 18–19). One may, however, legitimately criticize the second major source of attested data used by the medieval Arab grammarians, viz., poetry, and the author is quick to point out that not only is poetry fundamentally different from prose, it is also certainly not representative of ordinary speech. It is the focus on the latter point of view of ordinary or commonly occurring language which is a desideratum for any theory of descriptive grammar (p. 21). Also, one had to be quite careful as a grammarian to exclude lahīn ‘solecism, faulty speech’, and to choose eloquent speakers confident in their Arabic: al-fusah al-maw‘ūq bi-arabiyyatihim (p. 22). Of course, this generally meant using data from the ‘ahl al-wabar ‘bedouins’—not the ‘ahl al-madar ‘urban dwellers’ (see Joshua Blau, 'The role of the bedouins as arbiters in linguistic questions’ JSS, 1963, 8: 42–51). Suleiman concludes that ‘... the corpus of Arabic data is full of anomalies and contradictions ...’ (p. 25). However, there can be little doubt that the author is correct to emphasize that although illa is basically a descriptive term, its ‘primary aim is nevertheless one of prescription and regulation’ (p. 31). This does not fit in well, however, with Ibn Jinnī’s use of illa (pp. 64–108), since for him the notion has the senses of a: (1) descriptive device; and (2) generative device (p. 103). This is tantamount to claiming that the Arab grammarians were the first generative grammarians—a perspective which today’s Chomskyan linguists would probably deny. The author also points out that Ibn Jinnī’s ‘realist epistemology’ has ‘a strong mentalist or psycholinguistic flavour’ (p. 104).

Unquestionably, Suleiman makes a solid case throughout the tome that the medieval Arab grammarians operated with the notions of deep and surface structure, and thus, at least in this sense, were Chomskyan in their orientation. In the discussion, e.g., of al-Suyūtī’s Al-Iqtiraḥ fi ‘ilm ‘usūl al-nahw, it is shown that the double verbs, such as ‘adda ‘to count’, derive from an underlying *adada via the ‘illa known as taxṣif ‘lightness’ (p. 190). A second example of this phenomenon can be seen in the consideration of ‘asl ‘origin’, as istahwaḍa ‘to overwhelm’ can be derived from a base form *hawada, although the actual surface verb is ḥuḍa ‘to turn aside’ (ibid.). Finally, let me cite a third example from Ibn Jinnī, who states that the surface form of mızān ‘scales’ is to be derived from an underlying *miwzān, and this process occurs ‘to avoid the heaviness [ḥiqal ‘heaviness’] associated with this form in actual speech’ (p. 69).

Suleiman’s book is a notable achievement, and once again one sees that medieval Arab grammatical theory has great relevance for practitioners of modern linguistics.

Although this book has been carefully edited and proofread, a few errors came to my attention. The term qiyaṣ ‘analogy’ should be with a non-emphatic s (p. 180); lām al’ibrīḍā ‘initial or inceptive lām’ should not have its first glottal stop present since it is a hamzat ulwaṣl (p. 183); Maẓammad is
a typographical error for Muhammad ‘Muhammad’ (p. 30); and the citation of the journal of the German Oriental Society should be Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft (p. 217).

ALAN S. KAYE

ILDIKÓ BELLÉR-HANN AND CHRIS HANN:

*Turkish region: state, market and social identities on the East Black Sea coast.*


The title of Ildikó Bellér-Hann and Chris Hann’s book is a tribute to Paul Stirling, the eminent social anthropologist whose seminal work *Turkish village*, published in 1965, broke new ground in the field of Anatolian anthropology. Nonetheless *Turkish region* would have deserved a more informative title on its cover since it deals with the ethnically and linguistically diverse Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey and is of interest not only to specialists of Turkey but also to researchers dealing with the Caucasus. The book is based primarily on extensive fieldwork undertaken during six journeys between 1983 and 1999, years of tremendous social, cultural and economic transformation in Turkey. The authors concentrate on the province of Rize and the three adjoining counties of Artvin. The region is referred to as ‘Lazistan’. The term, used for the sake of convenience, should not be confused with the historical Ottoman sub-province of the same name that extended from Trabzon to territories deep inside today’s Georgia. Throughout their research Bellér-Hann and Hann explore personal and social spheres by focusing particularly on changing social attitudes. Many comments and discussions in this well-researched book have relevance not only for Lazistan but also for Turkey as a whole.

The pervasive presence of the state and its administrative system is studied in the first chapter. The authors discuss the role played by the educational system in preventing the emergence of alternative discourses on national culture and identity. They analyse the ambiguous attitudes of the people towards the state—which is perceived as an intruding outside force, but which is nonetheless expected to provide protection and support, in particular, to the ailing tea industry. The tea crop, introduced in the 1950s, has completely transformed the region and is central to its economy.

Chapter ii focuses on the integration of town and countryside in the context of the periodic markets which are a form of continuity with traditional practices. Attempts at rationalizing the economy of the market place through, *inter alia*, taxation, have always been resisted, which explains the electoral success of right-wing parties advocating greater economic liberalization. Yet partial privatization has had a negative impact for the tea-growers, since private enterprises, in contra-distinction to state-owned companies, have a tendency to delay their payments. The former Prime Minister Turgut Özal’s privatization initiatives have transformed the economic landscape and led to a more consumer-oriented society and to the integration of the regional economy at the national level. The Russian markets which emerged after the opening of the border with Georgia, had a significant impact on the region, mainly because of their destabilizing effects on local small shopkeepers.

Prostitution too seriously affected the economic and the emotional stability of several families.
In chapter iv the authors argue that the concept of ‘civil society’, usually defined by its opposition to the state, is of little use in Lazistan, where political parties are in the main the only realms of voluntary association beside the segregated world of informal networks of friendship. The latter play an important role in upholding communal ties and are based on co-operation and mutual help. Gender issues, evoked in the previous chapter, are also fundamental in the debates regarding patriarchy (chapter v) and marriage (chapter vi). Despite state intervention, traditional gender roles have not changed greatly, and the position of women varies according to social class, education and geographical location. Marriage in this context is not a relationship between two individuals, but is usually arranged by families. Though few people marry against their will, it is difficult to resist social pressure, which explains the relatively high occurrence of marriages between first cousins. Differences between the conservative west and the more liberal east are also perceived in attitudes towards religion, discussed in chapter vii. The authors explore the distinctions between popular religiosity, with its unorthodox practices and beliefs, and more fundamentalist interpretations of Islam. Political Islam merges those distinctions and has a stronghold in traditionally conservative Lazistan. Most ordinary people, however, do not perceive secularism and religion as two conflicting world-views and everyday habits are a combination of both. Bellér-Hann and Hann question the alleged dichotomy between the rival and, in theory, incompatible ideologies of Kemalism and Islam. They reveal a much more complex everyday reality where aspects of the two ideologies merge more or less peacefully. Unfortunately the equivocal attitude of the Turkish state towards religion, particularly since the military coup of 1980, is not discussed. Yet the state’s promotion of the Turkish Islam synthesis by means of cultural and educational policies, and the crackdown on political Islam, have been influential in shaping contemporary attitudes towards Kemalism and religion.

In the final chapter, on ethnicity, the authors stress that the four ethnic groups that inhabit the region, namely Turks, Lazis, Hemşinlis and Georgians, are to a large extent assimilated. The authors convincingly argue that the region follows the social and economic trends of the rest of the country. It is not clear why there is no mention of the fifth ethnic group of the region—the Roma or Poşa as they are known locally—of whom a substantial number have settled in Arhavi.

This chapter, however, serves mainly as a platform to question the concept of culture and to criticize Wolfgang Feurstein’s Herderian vision of the Lazi as a volk, even though Feurstein himself states that he has never read Herder. Their patronizing opprobrium of Feurstein’s linguistic interventionism is a little out of place since Bellér-Hann and Hann do not themselves discuss the linguistic situation in north-eastern Turkey, even though they admit that language is a major criterion for ethnic differentiation. According to optimistic estimates there are only about 250,000 Lazuri speakers left. Lazuri is a Kartvelian language that is related to Georgian, Mingrelian and Svan. Since the state, despite a relative liberalization, continues to deny ethnic identities, the kind of Lazi cultural assertiveness advocated by Feurstein, who devised a script for Lazuri and had to face the wrath of the Turkish authorities for distributing it, has an important role to play in saving the linguistic diversity of the region and thus an important part of our common human heritage.
WILLIAM HALE:
Turkish foreign policy, 1774–2000.

The end of the Cold War has sparked much research on Turkish foreign policy, and William Hale’s book is a welcome contribution to the growing literature in this field. There are few overall studies of Turkish foreign policy from a historical perspective and in this sense the book fills an important gap in the literature. Hale is an eminent expert on modern Turkish politics, and the book under review is in some respects a sequel to his earlier book, Turkish politics and the military (London, 1994), in terms of its scope and treatment of the topic.

It surveys Ottoman/Turkish foreign policy from the late eighteenth century to the end of the twentieth century in nine chapters. Chapters i–v are devoted to Turkey’s foreign relations during the late Ottoman empire, the War of Independence and Ataturk era, the Second World War, and the Cold War (in two chapters). Chapters vi–ix deal with several aspects of Turkish foreign policy after the Cold War: strategic options and the domestic environments; United States, NATO, and the European Union; Greece, Cyprus, the Balkans and Transcaucasia; and Central Asia and the Middle East. Chapter x offers some speculative suggestions as to what challenges Turkish foreign policy makers seem likely to face in the first few decades of the twenty-first century in the light of historical experiences and policies.

The work is based on three main assumptions, the first of which is that both the late Ottoman empire and (its successor) modern Turkey fit into the international system as a middle power, in terms of geographical position, human and natural resources, economic development, and foreign policy behaviour in the international system. Basing his analysis on the definition of Turkey as a middle power, Hale tries to show how medium-sized states have acted in the changing international environment of the past 200 years. The second assumption is that there have been important elements of continuity, as well as change, in Turkish foreign policy since the days of the late Ottoman empire. Following events back to the late eighteenth century, Hale attempts to illuminate the continuities, as well as the changes, in foreign relations. The third assumption is that the dominant themes in Turkish foreign policy in the post-Cold War era have been realism and pragmatism, as had been the case with most Turkish diplomacy since the late eighteenth century. Throughout the book the author has attempted to assess the effects of domestic political changes, and varying self-perceptions of the identity of the state, on the way it conducted its foreign policy.

The book has some weaknesses: although it covers the period 1774–2000, the reader will not find much on Ottoman foreign relations. Much of the book is devoted to the period since the end of the First World War (pp. 44–322); only pages 13–43 describe the years of the long nineteenth century, 1774–1918. While concentrating on the period since the Second World War, the book merely summarizes the evolution of late Ottoman foreign policy. Secondly, Hale relies principally on material available in English (especially articles in certain journals), but ignores the flowering Turkish-language literature on Turkish foreign policy (for example, Faruk Sönmezçoğlu (ed.), Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi, second edition, Istanbul, 1998). Thirdly, there are some factual errors in the text. Two examples will suffice: the revolt in Bosnia-Herzegovina began in 1875, not in 1874 (p. 27); and in April 1877, the Russians declared war on the Ottomans, not the other way round (p. 28).
These reservations notwithstanding, Hale’s work is the most complete study to date of Turkish foreign policy in historical perspective. The major strength of the book is that it is the first historical analysis of the evolution of Turkish foreign policy over the last two-hundred years, and it is a rare attempt to look into the Ottoman bases of modern Turkish foreign policy. Classroom instructors will welcome Hale’s clear and highly readable treatment of Turkish foreign policy, and it will surely become a standard textbook in the field.

GÖKHAN ÇETINSAYA

JAN PAUL HINRICHS (ed.):
Passage Istanbul.
(Het Oog in’t Zeil, 8.) 240 pp. Amstelveen: Bas Lubberhuizen Uitgever.

This book is the eighth volume of the series Het Oog in’t Zeil which explores the literary heritage of major European cities. Fifteen writers from varied backgrounds have contributed to this volume. Jan Paul Hinrichs, the editor, avowedly chose an Orientalist perspective and thus the book deals mainly with European perceptions of Istanbul. Even though the primary focus is on literature the volume includes well-researched articles on other topics, notable among them Ruud Visschedijk’s discussion of Istanbul in Western cinema, Bas Lubberhuizen’s retelling and analysis of Le Corbusier’s (1887–1965) influential 1911 journey from Berlin to Istanbul and Petra Couvé’s essay on the astonishing encounter between Leo Trotsky (1879–1940) and the Belgian novelist Georges Simenon (1903–89), who interviewed the prophet of the permanent revolution in 1933 on Prinkipo island for the French daily Paris-Soir.

Articles on Gustave Flaubert (1821–80), Pierre Loti (1850–1923), Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) and Constantine Cavafy (1863–1933) underline the extent to which Istanbul, Constantinople and Byzantium are imprinted on European literary consciousness. The most interesting essays, however, are dedicated to lesser-known literary figures such as the Armenian poet Daniel Varoujan (1884–1915), the Soviet poet Joseph Brodsky (1940–96) and the exiled Russian poet Ivan Bunin (1870–1953), as well as to several Dutch travellers little known outside the Dutch-speaking world.

The eclectic selection of articles in Passage Istanbul make it a well balanced introduction, for both scholars and dilettantes, to a city that once ruled over three continents. It is, however, unfortunate that Turkish poets and authors have been ignored in this volume: there are many who could have fitted Hinrichs’ Orientalist agenda, for example Yahya Kemal Beyatlı (1884–1958), who argued that the likes of Théophile Gauthier (1811–72) and Pierre Loti understood the Orient better than many of his Turkish contemporaries.

LAURENT MIGNON

HEND GILLI-ELEWY:

Originally prepared as a Cologne thesis in 1998, this is the first published
attempt in a European language to assess the fate of Iraq under Mongol rule. After a short introductory chapter outlining problems and sources, ch. ii surveys the years preceding Hulegu’s attack in 1258, the circumstances of the conquest and its immediate aftermath. Chapter iii, by far the largest single section of the book, examines the personalities and policies of those who governed the province on behalf of the Ilkhans, notably the celebrated historian ‘Alâ’ al-D¯ın Juwayn¯ (657/1259–681/1283). Social and economic conditions, including currency, taxation and agriculture, are dealt with in ch. iv, while ch. v is concerned with urban life and matters such as religious currents and the status of Jews and Christians under a regime which was pagan, at least until the adoption of Islam by the Ilkhan Ghazan in 694/1295.

The result is a competent and useful study which throws a good deal of light on the character both of the Mongol regime and of its Persian servitors. Gilli-Elewy’s conclusions are balanced and judicious. In describing a depressing series of conspiracies, trumped-up charges and executions, he is careful not to yield to the temptation to exculpate the Muslim officials and lay the sole blame at the door of the nomad aristocracy; even the cultured Juwayn¯ does not emerge spotless. Two major phases in the province’s history are identified: one in which the Baghdad government was relatively autonomous (although on a number of occasions the central wazir or some other powerful figure entrusted it to a brother); the other (after c. 1295), in which the region was much more closely under the supervision of the Ilkhans’ central administration and the local authorities were eclipsed. In some measure this was a natural consequence of the greater interest shown by Ghazan and his brother and successor Öljeyt¯u in the frontier with Mamluk Syria, as also of Öljeyt¯u’s conversion to the Shia in c. 707/1307 and the need accordingly to keep in close touch with Twelver Shii centres such as Hilla and Najaf. One cannot help wondering, however, whether such periodization is in part an illusion created by the uneven distribution of the source material. Down to c. 700/1300 the local chronicle Haw¯adh al-Zam¯ān ascribed to Ibn al-Fuwat¯ı is highly informative, and the merest glance at Gilli-Elewy’s footnotes suffices to demonstrate that he makes commendably full use of it. But, as he points out (p. 129), Ibn al-Fuwat¯ı had no successor and thereafter we lack narratives that focus so heavily on affairs in Iraq: inevitably the book has to cover the era of Öljeyt¯u and his son Ab¯ū Sa‘ıd in a more cursory fashion than that of the earlier Ilkhans.

I noticed few factual errors: it is difficult to see in what sense Waššāf can be said to have ‘ergänzt’ Rashid al-D¯ın’s Jami’ al-Taw¯arikh (p. 9); Simeon Rabban-ata was not a Jewish physician (p. 188, n. 80) but a Nestorian Christian one. More seriously, perhaps, a number of publications that presumably appeared just around or after the completion of the thesis have not been consulted. The chapter on the economy might have benefited from Tom Allsen’s Commodity and exchange in the Mongol empire (1997). In the section on religious affairs, it is strange to find no reference to the papers edited by Denise Aigle in L’Iran face à la domination mongole (1997), notably Monika Gronke, ‘La religion populaire en Iran mongol’, and Jean Calmard, ‘Le chiisme imamite sous les ilkhans’. Gilli-Elewy might have wished, too, to qualify the statement that ‘die Mongolen keine genauen Vorstellungen einer Verwaltung hatten’ (p. 47) had he read David Morgan’s most recent thoughts on Ilkhanid government, in the volume just mentioned and in the Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review (1996).

PETER JACKSON
BIRGITT HOFFMANN: 
*Waqf im mongolischen Iran: Raşīuddîns Sorge um Nachruhm und Seeleheit.*

The *Waqf-nāma-yi Rab’-i Rashīdī* (or, as its author himself called it, *al-Waqfiyya al-Rashīdiyya*) is the work of the Ilkhanid wazir and polymath, Rashīd al-Dīn Fadl-Allāh al-Hamadānī, best known, perhaps, for his voluminous world history, the *Jāmi‘ al-Tawārīkh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*). Its importance is manifold. It is one of the earliest waqf documents to have survived; it exists in an autograph copy, drafted in 709/1309 by a major figure in the history of Ilkhanid Iran; and through its length and detail it furnishes an unusually extensive insight into the workings of a waqf institution, the purposes behind its endowment, and the vast economic resources at the founder’s disposal. In this masterly study, Birgitt Hoffmann, the author of a number of articles on waqfiyya and on Rashīd al-Dīn’s *Waqf-nāma* in particular, embarks on a much-needed analysis of the document, in which not only are the juridical and stylistic aspects subjected to minute examination, but full attention is given to the historical and geographical contexts. The Rab’-i Rashīdī was plundered after Rashīd al-Dīn’s execution in 718/1318 and again following that of his son, the wazir Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad, in 736/1336; by the end of the fourteenth century it was in ruins, and indeed it may have functioned properly for less than three decades. Less can be said on the architectural side, consequently, although Hoffmann makes careful use of the investigations conducted on the site by Wilber and by Minovi in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

Rashīd al-Dīn is in many ways an enigmatic figure. Belonging to a family of Jewish physicians, he was either a convert to Islam or, at most, a second-generation Muslim. Throughout his career in the upper reaches of the Ilkhanid bureaucracy, he had to run the gamut of accusations from his political enemies that he had not truly abandoned his ancestral faith; and although his various theological works were probably designed to remedy the ignorance of the Ilkhan and the Mongol aristocracy—who had themselves embraced Islam only recently—there can be little doubt that his chief priority was to assuage doubts concerning his own spiritual allegiance. As Hoffmann remarks (p. 54), the production of a comprehensive biography represents ‘eine große Verlockung ..., der bislang jedoch noch niemand nachgegeben hat’. Not the least interesting and valuable part of the book, therefore, is the excellent survey of Rashīd al-Dīn’s background and life (pp. 53–91) and of his numerous progeny (pp. 91–9), where the author not only distils the most up-to-date research but makes her own original contribution by a careful sifting of the primary material in both Persian and Arabic.

Throughout the book, references are helpfully given both to the facsimile produced by Minovi and Afshar (1971) and to their subsequent edition of the text (1977). A lengthy appendix (pp. 249–348) comprises the translation of part 2 of ch. iii of the *Waqf-nāma*, where Rashīd al-Dīn makes detailed arrangements for the operation of the several charitable institutions attached to the foundation—the mosque, the school, the scriptorium (which was expected annually to produce a copy of each of the founder’s literary works), the hospice, the orphanage, and so on. There are numerous figures, maps and tables, an extensive bibliography and some valuable indices. Hoffmann’s
sacrifice is tireless, but eminently readable. This admirable monograph deserves a place in the library of anyone concerned with the political, economic or social history of Mongol Iran or with the history of Iranian Islam.

PETER JACKSON

OTAR KADSHAIA and HEINZ FÄHNRICHT:
*Mingrelisch–Deutsches Wörterbuch.*

Mingrelian, Laz, Svan and Georgian form the South Caucasian (Kartvelian) language family. Only Mingrelian, spoken in the lowlands of western Georgia, and Laz, largely confined to N.E. Turkey, are mutually intelligible. Because speakers of all four languages resident in Georgia (or the former USSR) were classified as ‘Georgians’ in around 1930, no one knows how many Mingrelians there are (perhaps a million), nor of course how many actually speak the language. Though some communist texts, and many local newspapers and journals, were published in Mingrelian (using the Georgian script) from the late 1920s to 1938, Mingrelian was never officially awarded literary status, the most widely spoken indigenous Caucasian language to be denied this privilege. Most Mingrelians are educated in Georgian, which they employ both as principal means of communication outside the home and for writing. In 1914 the talented (but soon to perish) Georgian linguist Ioseb Q’ipshidze produced a 574-page grammar (in Russian; republished 1994) with texts and dictionary, which made Mingrelian at that time perhaps the best described of all the Caucasian languages (including Georgian, with its long literary tradition). The neglect of Mingrelian for most of the Soviet period meant that after 1938 very few materials appeared, and those that did catered mainly for the specialist markets of folklore and philology. Since Georgia’s independence (1991) publishing in and on Mingrelian has increased. By way of lexicons alone (sc. Mingrelian-Georgian) the present compilers mention those by: Avaliani (1995, also including Svan); Ch’araia (1997 from a 1918 ms.); Eliava (1997); Pipia (in preparation); and a 5,000-page manuscript by Kadshaia himself, from which the present work is an extract, with German replacing Georgian. One could add B. K’ilanava’s *900 Mingrelian words* (1998) and A. Chikvania’s *Mingrelian expressive words and expressions* (1998).

This latest offering begins with a mere five-paragraph foreword. More useful than the nationalist propaganda of paragraphs 3 and 4 would have been a statement explaining (a) the principles by which the selection of words presented here was made, and (b) why Kadshaia’s entire manuscript could not have been prepared for a German edition (obviously in fascicles) to match K. Tschenkéli’s ‘Georgisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch’ (1965–74), surely a worthy project. All that readers are told is that a roman transcription accompanies each basic entry for those unfamiliar with the Georgian script, in which the Mingrelian is, as it should be, represented (two additional characters are necessary for schwa, transcribed by ‘y’, and the glottal stop, though here an apostrophe indicates the latter—usually the Georgian graph for [q’] is inverted). However, since all extra citations within the entries for verbs are given exclusively in the Georgian script, serious readers need it anyway. We also learn that, whilst verbs have as their basic entry the (usually preverbless) masdar, each such entry contains, where they exist, the 3rd person singular forms of the present, future, aorist, ‘1st perfect (resultative)’, and ‘3rd perfect
It is customary to distinguish (for Georgian, at least) three Series of tense-aspect-mood paradigms, the first member of Series III, the perfect, being usually deemed the inferential counterpart to the Series II aorist, used for factual past statements. Now in 1953 (‘Ibero-Caucasica V’, in Georgian) native-speaker Giorgi Rogava demonstrated that Mingrelian has a fourth Series, containing inferential counterparts to the Series I paradigms—it is the first member of this extra Series, formed by circumfix no-ue and meaning ‘X is/was apparently VERBing’, that is presented under the guise of the mysterious ‘3rd perfect (resultative)’.

Little progress is possible in Kartvelian languages without a full understanding of the verb. The reputations of grammars and dictionaries thus essentially depend on their treatment of this category. The present volume has systematicity in its favour, but Q’ipshidze is more fulsome, particularly concerning the (often complex) combinations of preverbs (in which Mingrelian is vastly richer than Georgian) and roots. For example, the half column (large print) here devoted to ula ‘going’ compares with six and a half columns (small print) for the same root l- in Q’ipshidze! Whilst all 3rd person singular aorists end in -u, some (most) conjugations demand -i, others -e for the first two persons, but the entries here are silent on which is required. Causative formations (like postpositions) are generally omitted. Under ngaaru ‘crying’ one will not find the simple expression ‘X cries’ (ingars), and one wonders why ongaruans is translated ‘er beweint’—surely it corresponds to Georgian at’irebs ‘X makes Y cry’? All verbs are assigned a participle formed by circumfix na-ueri (translated as ‘Entgelt für das [Verb]’), a formation not mentioned by Q’ipshidze and unencountered in my investigations (into the westernmost dialect).

To illustrate an average verbal entry let us take ch’aru ‘writing’. Given (with Series-forms) are: 1. ch’aruns ‘X writes’, 2. ich’aruns ‘X writes for X’s self’, 3. uch’aruns ‘X writes for Y’, 4. ich’aru(n) ‘X is being written’ (long vowels, absent from the dialect with which I am familiar, are indicated by geminates), 5. ach’aru(n) ‘X is being written for/to Y’, 6. ich’are(n) ‘X can be written’, 7. ach’are(n) ‘X can be written by/for/to Y’ + participles. These all take perfectivizing preverb do- duuch’aru appears as the (1st) perfect for (1)–(3)—by adding the external pronouns musho ‘for self’ to (2), tisho ‘for Y’ to (3), the authors could have indicated how the language syntactically preserves the semantic difference. For a full entry I would have expected to see reference to at least the additional: och’arapuans ‘X makes Y write’, ech’aru ‘describe’, mech’aru ‘write to (thither)’, moch’aru ‘write to (hither)’, gilach’aru ‘write around’, ginoch’aru ‘copy’, mishach’aru ‘register’, eshach’aru ‘lift (text) out of; remove (text)’, inoch’aru ‘inscribe’. Strangely, gech’aru/gech’arapa ‘write on; assess’ has its own entry, minus all finite forms. Entries such as rouchich’aru ‘fate’ might usefully have been etymologized, here giving ‘forehead’s-writing’, which has no (single word) parallel in Georgian but for which cp. neighbouring Abkhaz a.la.x’s.n. ts’a the.eye.above[=forehead].on.place[=record] ‘fate’.

This is a useful contribution to Mingrelian studies, but what is really needed is for the Georgian Academy file-cards on Mingrelian and Svan to be turned into their respective dictionaries—for which Kartvelologists have been yearning for decades.

GEORGE HEWITT
THOMAS T. ALLSEN:

Culture and conquest in Mongol Eurasia.

Any new publication by Thomas T. Allsen is justly followed by ripples of excitement in the world of medieval Euro-Asian research. A new book excites those ripples to tidal proportions. Allsen’s latest study, following his appetiser, Commodity and exchange in the Mongol Empire, fully deserves such anticipatory enthusiasm and few if any could be disappointed at the result of his efforts, Culture and conquest in Mongol Eurasia.

Once again the focus of Allsen’s attention is the Chinggisid courts in medieval Iran and China, discerned through the medium of Mongolian, Chinese, Persian, Arabic, European and Caucasian sources and presented in Allsen’s always readable and lucid style. His conclusions are possibly radical but his argument is convincing and the picture he unveils of the medieval Mongol polity is one that will fit securely behind those who, in recent years, have been urging a reassessment of the traditional, sometimes negative, view of the Chinggisid empire. While acknowledging the existence of both a Pax Mongolica and a Tartar Yoke, and recognizing the traditional role of nomadic society in facilitating communication while at the same time fostering destruction, Allsen demonstrates how the Mongols initiated and perpetuated cultural exchange on a vast scale in the furtherance of their imperialistic ambitions. Rather than being a by-product of imperial conquest, with urban entrepreneurs and traders taking advantage of newly opening markets, cultural exchange was initiated and promoted by the Mongols themselves, who acted as the agents of their own multinational cultural clearing house. For the Mongols, human talent was just another form of legitimate plunder and a further source of booty which along with land, slaves, animals, precious material and other goods, was expected to be equitably divided among the ‘royal family’. It was this human traffic which formed a central element in the empire’s cultural exchange.

The extent of this human traffic is made plain from the outset of Allsen’s study. The Mongols were a minority in their own empire and they needed the help of ‘foreigners’ to run their vast administration. These ‘foreigners’ would ideally be without local political or social ties and it was in Yuan China that the ruling Mongols developed a technique for accommodating these criteria. This entailed dividing the Yuan population into geographically defined groups and determining office, promotion, and work location according to quotas which ensured equal treatment for western Asians and Mongols with those from north and south China. The result was an administration composed, at all levels, of a complex ethnic, linguistic, and religious mix which meant ‘thousands of agents of cultural transmission and change dispersed throughout the Yuan realm’ (p. 7). The table which accompanies this point graphically illustrates the social depth and extent of this systematic immigration and transmigration, with Italians, Flemings, Scandinavians, Germans and other Europeans among immigrants from western Asia working as everything from leopard keepers and goldsmiths to accountants and singers. To a lesser extent, the same pattern was evident in Iran, with eastern Asians employed in occupations ranging from agriculturalists and stonemasons to cooks and wet nurses.

The book initially outlines the economic and political framework in which
this Mongol-inspired cultural exchange was able to develop. Iran and China had long had commercial, cultural and even religious links dating back to the earliest times and substantial ‘Persian’ trading centres are recorded in China as early as the mid-eighth century, with Chinese governments establishing institutions to administer these growing communities. With the advent of the Mongols, the centuries-old relationship between Iran and China underwent a dramatic intensification, initiated in particular by the accession of the Great Qa’an, Möngke, in 1251. Allsen deftly emphasizes the significance of the establishment of the Ilkhanate and details the sometimes convoluted history of the Mongols in Iran until the demise of Abū Sa‘īd in 1335. Allsen sees this whole period as being of great importance to both China and Iran, and finds the development of their relationship reflected in an ‘enduring partnership’. The two countries maintained diplomatic, ideological and military support: ‘They exchanged intelligence, commodities, tribute, personnel, and envoys’. And their national resources were ‘appropriated, apportioned, and exchanged’ (p. 56).

Two men who recognized and took full personal advantage of the enormous cultural opportunities of this ‘enduring partnership’, and who receive Allsen’s full attention and praise, are the Persian wazir Rashīd al-Dīn and the Mongol emissary to China and Iran, the chancellor Bolad Aqa (aka Pūlād and Po-loi). The detailing of Bolad’s career from a number of diverse sources, Chinese and Persian, is particularly welcome since the Yuan sources do not contain his biography. Though commonly credited as ‘a literate Mongolian and informant of Rashīd al-Dīn’ (p. 79) Allsen acknowledges Bolad as far more than this, characterizing him ‘as a Mongolian intellectual—literate, cosmopolitan, and a man of affairs’ (p. 79) whom Rashīd al-Dīn frequently praised, consulted, quotes, and to whom he would also defer. However, though Bolad was a respected and powerful Mongol administrator who encouraged reform in both China and Iran and one ‘who favoured accommodation and innovation’ (p. 79), he remained true to his nomadic Mongolian roots and traditions and is unlikely, Allsen concludes, to have been hauled before any court and tried for ‘un-Mongolian activities’ (p. 79). Rashīd al-Dīn’s particular indebtedness to Bolad in the compilation of the Jāmi‘ al-Tawārikh and others of his literary works, is fully explored in a chapter on historiography.

The body of the work, often of a descriptive nature, concerns specific exchanges of cultural ware. Studies on, for example, astronomy have appeared before, but Allsen has uncovered some fascinating information in the field of agronomy, the Chinese government office over which Bolad held considerable sway, and cuisine, the area which served as the launching pad for both Bolad’s and Rashīd al-Dīn’s careers. Other areas examined include medicine, printing, geography and cartography.

The final chapters of this welcome book deal with the centrality to this cultural exchange of the Mongols themselves. Muslim astronomers went to China and vice versa, not because their counterparts wanted to exchange scientific information but because their Mongol masters wanted second opinions and further clarification of their astronomical findings.

This is an important book not only for the refreshing light it throws on Chinggisid history but also for the wealth of new material it has uncovered in the process. The Mongols as cultural brokers is an exciting concept in itself but the evidence that Allsen has produced in support of this view will occupy and entertain specialists for some time to come.

GEORGE LANE
NĀŞĪR KHUSRAW:
Knowledge and liberation, a treatise on philosophical theology: a new edition and English translation of the Gushāyish wa rahāyish by Faqir M. Hunzai, with an introduction and commentary by Parwiz Morewedge.

ANNEMARIE SCHIMMEL (ed. and trans.):
Make a shield from wisdom: selected verses from Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s Divān.

ALICE C. HUNSBERGER:
Nasir Khusraw, the ruby of Badakhshan: a portrait of the Persian poet, traveller and philosopher.

At a time when there has never been more talk about the need for better informed Western understandings of Islam, it is sobering to reflect still just how little material which is both readable and reliable is available to the English reader who wishes to discover something of even many of the major figures of Islamic civilization. Due acknowledgement should therefore be made of such excellent initiatives as that represented by the publications programme of the London Institute of Ismaili Studies, in which all three titles under review appear. Both as a committed Ismaili who attained the rank of hujjat in the Fatimid hierarchy, and as a leading figure of the early medieval Persian literary renaissance, Nāṣir-i Khusraw is an ideal topic for this programme, with its aim of seeking ‘to explore the relationship of religious ideas to broader dimensions of society and culture’. Collectively, the three books mark a significant advance in enhancing the understanding of an exceptionally interesting Islamic thinker and poet. Partly as a consequence of Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s exceptionally varied oeuvre, each book takes a very different approach. A comparison between them thus itself stimulates some reflection on the possibilities and the problems inherent in the task of writing for a twenty-first century English-reading public about an eleventh-century Persian writer.

The core textual disciplines of edition, translation and commentary, themselves the necessary foundations of intercultural understandings, are deployed to admirable effect in the first book under review, which presents the Gushāyish wa rahāyish (‘Unfettering and Setting Free’), a set of thirty questions and answers which is one of the shorter philosophical treatises composed by Nāṣir-i Khusraw in Persian prose. In his short editorial preface, F. M. Hunzai explains his recourse to the author’s other extant philosophical works, in the absence of independent manuscript evidence, to correct the
errors in the two previous editions by Sa’id Nafisi; and briefly explains the methodology of his English translation, which is admirably clear and readable. Parviz Morewedge provides a lucid introduction to Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s hermeneutic philosophical theology which concludes with a persuasive counter to those still prevalent attitudes which would marginalize Ismaili thought as heretical and obscurantist. Both here and in Morewedge’s economically organized analytical commentary which follows the translation, attention is particularly drawn to the originality of Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s doctrine of time, which specified existence in terms of the ‘present time’ and to his distinctive orientation within the Islamic context to a neo-Plotinian attribution of existence to the Universal Intellect rather than to God. Readers with interests in medieval philosophy should thus find much of interest in this carefully produced scholarly volume.

Students of Islamic literature familiar with Annemarie Schimmel’s work will have a good idea of what to expect from her short study, a slightly revised version of the first edition (London, 1993). It provides a quick introduction to Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s other persona as the prolific author of a very large diwān of Persian poetry. Mostly cast in the qaṣīda form, this is remarkably distinguished from the poetry of his Ghaznavid contemporaries by its thematic orientation towards Ismaili themes, especially its emphasis upon the pursuit of wisdom as a supreme ideal. Although slightly spoilt by a number of typographical errors, the book is composed with Schimmel’s customary verve. Through wide-ranging quotations in English translation, two introductory chapters establish a poetic profile for Nāṣir-i Khusraw and give a sense of his centrality within the Persian poetic tradition through frequent cross-reference to such favourite later poets as Rūmī and Iqbal. The third chapter consists of a linked series of longer quotations which provide an enjoyable overview of Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s handling of the qaṣīda, especially his use of the nasiḥ for remarkably vivid pictorial evocations of nature and the seasons.

Of the three approaches exemplified in these books, the most original and probably the one which will be found most congenial by many readers is that adopted by Hunsberger. Seeking to avoid the probability of most readers skipping the chapters on philosophy if these were separately composed, she has constructed her general introduction to Nāṣir-i Khusraw as both poet and philosopher around the remarkable narrative of his Safarnāma, the pioneering Persian prose travel book in which he describes his seven-year return journey from Khurasan to Cairo the Fatimid capital and to Mecca. After two introductory chapters which provide admirably clear accounts of the sources both for Nāṣir-i Khusraw’s life and for the texts of his works, the Safarnāma is used in the excellent version by Wheeler Thackston (Albany, N.Y., 1986) as the organizing principle around which to base generous extracts from the poetry and from the philosophical works.

It has to be said that, while the main ideas of the philosophical writings are clearly conveyed, the chopping up of their original presentation which Hunsberger’s method necessarily involves does entail some awkwardnesses of continuity across the volume as a whole. But the poetry comes off splendidly. Hunsberger provides very generous selections with always helpful running prose introductions and commentary. She also translates well, and many should find the measured freedom she permits herself more attractive than Schimmel’s more literal renderings. Compare for example, by way of concluding endorsement, the opening of the famous qaṣīda beginning āmad bāhār u naubat-i sarmā shud, where Schimmel (p. 66) has ‘Spring has come—
the air is cool and fresh / and the aged world is young again! / Dark blue
waterponds look now like wine; / meadows, silver-like, are now so soft green / and
the wind, once winter’s banner, turned / fragrant, like perfumed with
aloes-wood!’; Hunsberger (p. 153) renders ‘Spring arrived and the season of
ice has fled. / Once again this ancient world turns young. / Ice-blue water
now turns dark like wine, / Silvery fields turn a verdant green. January’s
harsh wind, whipping like flags, / Has turned soft like mildest mist of incense’.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

NICHOLAS SIMS-WILLIAMS:
_Bactrian documents from northern Afghanistan, I: Legal and
economic documents._

255 pp. (Studies in the Khalili Collection, Vol. III = Corpus

Nicholas Sims-Williams’ work contains texts and translations (but no
reproductions) of a stupendous number of documents composed in the
Bactrian dialect of Middle Iranian, which was previously known only
fragmentarily. These documents are written in Graeco-Bactrian cursive script,
a late vestige of Alexander the Great’s expedition. Among them are 26
documents, numbered A to X, which are of particular value, dating from the
years 110 to 549 in the era of the Tochi inscriptions, which I published in
_HuBS (= Baktrische Sprachdenkmäler, Wiesbaden 1966/7)._ Sims-Williams is
inclined to follow me in calling this era, which begun at 233
\(\text{B.C.}\) (not 232 as I had read), ‘Kushano-Sasanian’. The majority of the documents are preserved
in two copies, which occasionally show slight di
fferences.

Texts and translations are arranged face-to-face, which will be greatly
appreciated by users of the fascinating material. To numerous scholars the
world over, however, the Greek characters of the edition may prove to be an
obstacle to detailed study. For this reason I should like to suggest adopting
Latin transliteration in the future as far as possible, at least in the secondary
literature: Greek \(\varepsilon, \omicron\) > Latin \(e, o\); Greek \(\eta, \omicron\) > Latin \(\tilde{e}, \tilde{o}\); Greek \(\upsilon\) (which has
the phonetic value of \(h\) here) > Latin \(u\) (not \(y\)); Greek \(\varphi, \chi\) > Latin \(f, x\) (not
\(\phi, \chi\)); Greek \(\theta\) (rare in Bactrian) > Latin \(t\) with any diacritical sign available,
e.g. \(\tilde{t}\) (not \(\tilde{th}\)). To avoid confusion between the figures \(\xi\) (\(ksi\ not \(x\) \) ‘60’ and
\(\chi\) (\(khi/x\) ‘600’), the Greek figures must be rendered by ‘Arabic’ ones (e.g.
\(\sigma\xi\xi\xi=260; \tau\pi\pi\pi\pi=388\) in Tochi \(\chi\xi\xi\xi\xi=600-30-1=631\)).

Information on the geographical and historical framework was detailed by
Sims-Williams in his inaugural lecture as Professor of Iranian and Central
Asian Studies in the University of London delivered on 1 February 1996 and
published 1997 by the School of Oriental and African Studies. The geographical
centre is the kingdom of Röb, modern Rui, province of Samangān to
the north of the Hindu Kush; see ms. N malabo samiggano òdago abo sandarano
abo roboaraggo albaro ‘here in the district of Samingan, at Sandaran, the
court of the Khars of Röb’. The region of Gandara (Skt. Gandhara) to the
south of the Hindu Kush is mentioned but marginally. By focusing attention
on legal, economical, social, political, historical and ethnographic conditions,
the texts shed light upon a rather dark period of Afghan history. The new
material gives clear evidence of the co-existence of peoples of quite different
origins. Among them are also Turkish invaders, faint traces of whom I have
already identified in *HuBS* on the coin inscriptions (NumH) of Robert Göbl’s ‘Iranian Huns’.

The tradition of the Iranian Zoroastrians becomes obvious in proper names such as *öromazdano* ‘Ahuramazdian’, but *kamirdo*, the name or title of a god, looks rather heterodox or even heathen, cf. Av. *kamazdo*- ‘head’ (said of the heads of the daévas = devils). The name of the Hephthalite Huns (Greek *humnoi hoi hẹ̃phthalitai*, Skt. *húna*), which I had found abbreviated to *êb* in NumH 287, is now attested in its full form as *êbodalo* (pl. *êbodalano*, adj. *êbodalago*). Turkish elements are accumulated in ms. T 1f. *bagoaztiados* *storogo torosanzo oislogdo xotologio tapaglio bilgauo sabauo xinizado xalasano oislogdo* ‘Bagaziyas, the Turkish princess, the queen of Outlugh Tapaghlih Bilgâ Sâvûg, the princess of the Khalagh people’. Indian influence (probably Buddhist) is manifest in *razogolo* <Skt. *räja-kula*- ‘royal family, royal court’, in the PN *ddéborozo* <Skt. *devarâja* ‘king of the gods’, and even in the simplex *ddébo* PN <Skt. *deva* ‘god, ruler, lord’ in ms. Q 9 *ddébo ilologano poro tarmidágzo zadago* ‘Deb son of Yalgan, a native of Tarmid (Termez)’. As Sims-Williams has pointed out to me, the same also occurs in NumH 244 and 246 *bago ddébo* (not *ooóbo, doóbo, adébo*), where Iranian *bago* ‘lord’ is combined with its Indian equivalent *deva*. In this connection the question could be raised as to whether the title *sêro*, already known from the coin inscriptions NumH 241-243 and now attested in *sêrotorko* ‘ser of the Turks’ ms. S3,6,11 and *sêrogozoganuugo* belonging to the ser of Gozgan’ ms. R 18 (derived from *sêrogozoganu* ‘ser of Gozgan’) has the same origin as Greek *sêr* ‘Chinese’ (also ‘silk-worm’). If *sêro* is a title, as Sims-Williams argues, its position as first constituent of the two compounds is unexpected, the normal position of the title being seen in *gözoganuoxōuugo* ‘belonging to the lord of Gozgan’ ms. O18f.

A most useful description of the verbal system is preceded by a few notes on orthography. These deal mainly with the lack of a distinction between the letters *a* and *d* (but *o* is clearly distinguished from both), furthermore with the development *d* > *dd* occurring in the later texts before the palatal vowels *ê* and *i* (but also in the place name *madro, maddro* modern Madr). The end of the word regularly is a silent *o*, a historical spelling which continues the Bactrian nom. sg. ending *ô* > *o* of the third century B.C., generalizing it by replacing the older *e* and – *i* (e.g. prep. *vido* < *pati*). It seems worth mentioning that, from a descriptive point of view, similar historical or pseudo-historical spellings may link compound constituents as in *vido-robozo* ‘received’ < *pati-gftfua* (unless the spelling follows a more recent pronunciation as in *pi-sapdō* ‘agreed’ < *pati-satxta*-). A further development can be observed in the arbitrary use of *o* as a syllable boundary marker as in *alobaro* ‘court’, variant of *albaro* < *ôvûra*- , *storogo* ‘great’ < *storgo* (also *astorgo*), *êbodalo* ‘Hephthalite’ < *êbodalo*. The result is a puzzling orthographical inconsistency. Of the noun prefix Bactr. *abê*- ‘without, -less’ (= MP abê) Sims-Williams has found the variants *abêa-, abêto-, abêo-, abêu-*, *ôê-, bêo-, bêu* into which *abûe*- should be added (see below). The strange collection of spellings is a mixture of diachronic and synchronic variants of phonetic, morphologic and also purely graphic nature, including erroneous archaizations and other misspellings, thus being a typical example of the obstacles which Sims-Williams had to face in his deciphering of the texts.

Divine names show the natural tendency to preserve archaic forms such as *oavšô* ‘defied river’ (see below) < *waxša*- vs. *oavšô* ‘increase, interest’ < *waxša*- . Unexpected is the loss of initial long vowels in *azaborgo* ‘freeman’ < *azaborgo* < *azudborògo*, variant of *azudborgo* > *ûzûta-pûtrakâ*-;
dagogg ‘such, in such a way, in this way, thus’ < *ēdagogg < *aitāt/āit-gaunaka-

The text edition is followed by a superbly organized glossary in which the meanings posed by the author are briefly but precisely justified as far as he considered it necessary. Some notes:

abo prep. ‘to, for, against, into, in, on, at’: In the Lazard volume (Paris 1989) 209–15 I discussed kidabo, odabo, malabo where abo is graphically joined with the preceding kido ‘who’, odo ‘and’, malo ‘here’, a fact which suggested the interpretation of abo as an enclitic particle. Yet in all the new occurrences of these and other similar combinations abo clearly governs a following noun, which makes its equation with the well-attested preposition abo unavoidable though leaving the ‘graphic enclisis’ unexplained.

abubindo ‘detached, dissociated (from)’ (also abēbindo, abēmindo, bēbindo), for which Sims-Williams offers a complicated etymology, is in my opinion to be dissected into abue-<bindo ‘without bond, free of’ with bindo < Iran. bando ‘bond, tie’.

anauagdo ‘without deduction(?)’ shows a meaning quite different from that of Av. anahaxta- (*ana-: haxta-) ‘unauthorized’, with which it seems to agree etymologically.


laxmigo ‘place of burial’, cf. laxm(o) or laxm(i) [go] in the Hephthalite fragment MB7.1.

laxšatanigo stands beside laxmigo in mss. V and W, but NSW’s explanation as ‘crematorium’ with underlying laxšatano < *daxštana- is not without difficulties. Av. daxšta- means ‘sign’, and Av. daxša- must have the same basic meaning (> Phl. daxša ‘sign’, cf. Skt. laks- ‘sign’); in its only occurrence P21 (22) it does not mean ‘burning’ (‘Brand’ Bartholomae 676 after erroneous Phl. tr. dazisšn) but it is used there in the sense of ‘branding, stigmatization, brand’. Thus laxšatano possibly from *daxšštana- ‘place of physical punishment, torture, stigmatization, execution’.

miuroasano, mirosano, mirosano ‘east’: sano instead of expected asano is also attested in ūorsano NumH 240 vs. Phl. xorásən NumH 208.

oaxšo, a river god also attested on the Kushana coins is explained by Sims-Williams as ‘the deified river Oxos’, yet he must be a river-god in general. Note particularly ms. U 2 oaxšobagı kidabo gandaro spisindo ‘the god Wakhsh whom they worship in Gandara’ (similarly ms. W1), and note also Aramaeo-Iranian wxxswprtb < lord of the river fords’ on Davary’s inscription Laghman II, where wxxw (waxšu) points to the river of Laghman, a tributary of the Kabul river in Gandara, far from the course and the sources of the Oxos.

uilitobe: ro PN, in origin a title, Turk. ilitalıbir: Skt. hitivira in NumH 208 stands for *hitivira with simplification of the ligature lt. In a similar way the subsequent kharalaka (thus better than kharalāva) is graphically simplified from *kharaluka ‘Qarluq, member of the Qarluq people’.

xoēo ‘lord’ is contracted from xoadeō (variants xođdeo, xođdeo, xođđëo): The contracted xoēo was found by myself on the coin countermarks Km 84 and 97, see also mss 22 (1967) 56 on gēlanō xoē for gēlanō xoadeō. The contraction, which is not necessarily of purely graphic nature (oū inadvertently > ooo simplified > o), could originate from a vocativic weak form of the same type as Missis, Miss < Mistress.

zonolado PN < *zru(n)ə-dāta- ‘given by the time-god Zruwan’ (from the weak
stem zrūn- of Av. zruuuan-), variant zolado as also in zolado gōzogano (NumH 273, zolado intended in NumH 271?).

If my explanation of the PN zonolado is acceptable, zorigo, zorago ‘time, period, age’ comes from *zruwaka- rather than from *zrūnaka- as Sims-Williams wants, comparing Sogd. żwrn’k. As for the meaning note the interesting contrast between zamano in aso mandaronigo rōso parso mabaro zamano ‘from tomorrow and for all future time’ ms. J17 and zorigo in aso mōsō abo lāwēdano zorigo ‘from now to eternity’, ibid. 20.

The work is a philological and linguistic masterpiece. Iranologists will impatiently await the publication of its second volume.

HELMUT HUMBACH

JOHN R. HINNELLS:

The book under review is not just a collection of articles, but a testimony to thirty years of dedicated research and first-rate scholarship, devoted to a religion of great ethical and intellectual appeal, Zoroastrianism, and to an exciting community, the Parsis. The volume comprises eighteen of John Hinnells’ articles, and includes some of his major contributions on the influence of Zoroastrianism on Judaism and Christianity, as well as a selection from his ground-breaking work on the history, religion and diaspora of the Parsis. The articles are grouped together thematically in six sections. Each of the latter is introduced by the author’s recent reflections on the subject, written specifically for this book and outlining areas for future research. The volume also includes a hitherto unpublished paper on ‘War and medicine in Zoroastrianism’ (pp. 277–300), which was delivered as the Second Dastur S. H. Kutar Memorial Lecture at SOAS in spring 1999.

Section A, ‘Theory and method in Zoroastrian studies’ consists of one article entitled ‘Postmodernism and the study of Zoroastrianism’ (pp. 7–25). This is a revealing account of the ‘meta-narrative’ in the work of various scholars of Zoroastrianism and their more or less conscious move towards postmodernist approaches.

Section B, ‘Zoroastrian influence on biblical imagery’ offers two of Hinnells’ crucial articles on the influence of Zoroastrian cosmology on Jewish eschatology. Together with scholars such as Mary Boyce, Shaul Shaked and Andres Hultgård, John Hinnells is one of the most important proponents of the idea that Zoroastrianism had a powerful impact on Jewish and Christian eschatology. The first article, entitled ‘Zoroastrian saviour imagery’ (pp. 45–72), focuses on the development of cosmic dualism and the concept of evil, including the devil, demons and hell, and their counterpart, God, angels and heaven. Most of these concepts are found in the Zoroastrian texts right from the beginning, but in Judaism they surface only in the Intertestamental literature and the New Testament, dating roughly from around 200 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. Thus there appears to be a time-lag between the earliest historical contacts between Persians and Jews—dating back to the beginnings of the Achaemenid period in the sixth century B.C.E.—on the one hand, and the attestation of apparently Zoroastrian ideas in Jewish texts, which date only from the second century B.C.E. and later, on the other.

This problem is addressed in the second article entitled ‘Zoroastrian
influence on Judaism and Christianity: some further reflections’ (pp. 73–92), where Hinnells makes a compelling case for a later dating of the period of influence. He argues that it took place during the Parthian period, and convincingly describes the historical setting which makes such influence—as he writes—‘not only possible but likely’ (p. 33). For, between 200 B.C.E. and 100 C.E., Jews and Zoroastrians were allies fighting against common enemies, first the Seleucids and then the Romans, and Zoroastrianism was a powerful presence in the Jewish world.

The major part of this book, comprising Sections C, D and E, is appropriately dedicated to the field in which John Hinnells’ research is most innovative: that of the Parsi communities around the globe. Section C, on ‘Parsi history’ includes three articles on the relationship between the Parsis and the British (pp. 101–73), originally published in the 1978 edition of the Journal of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, and a fourth one on ‘Social change and religious transformation among Bombay Parsis in the early twentieth century’ (pp. 175–200).

What distinguishes his work from that of his predecessors, such as, for example, E. Kulke, is that—in his interpretation of attitudes to social problems—Hinnells takes religion seriously into account. This is particularly obvious in the articles collected in Section D entitled ‘Zoroastrianism and the Parsis’. For example, in his contribution on ‘Parsi charities in the 19th and 20th centuries’ (pp. 209–40) he convincingly demonstrates the religious foundations of the ‘Flowering of Zoroastrian benevolence’. Hinnells concludes that Parsi charities indicate that ‘the ideals of the religion ... have been implemented on a scale perhaps unequalled in any other community’ (p. 238).

The same approach is also apparent in his important article on ‘Contemporary Zoroastrian philosophy’ (pp. 241–75), where he summarizes the various religious and intellectual movements within the community in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In spite of a great diversity of opinion regarding Zoroastrian religious philosophy, he concludes that within their moral philosophy there are constant features, which have changed little over the millennia. These include care for Ahura Mazda’s good creation, and an emphasis on truth and honesty, industry and learning. These values and attitudes contributed to the Parsi rise to prosperity and influence in British India, and continue to characterize the diaspora communities. Hinnells points out that ‘[h]owever Zoroastrians may philosophise, what they practice has remained constant’ (p. 271).

Section E includes four articles in Hinnells’ current field of research: the Parsi diaspora, which is the title of this section. His article on Muncherji Bhownagree (pp. 307–34) throws new light on the second Asian MP at Westminster as a politician and as a Zoroastrian. The last three contributions on ‘The modern Zoroastrian diaspora’ (pp. 335–430) are comparative studies of Parsi settlements around the globe and investigate the modes of, and motives for, their emigration. All this work is based on original research and is without precedent both thematically and methodologically. With these studies Hinnells outlines a whole new field of research (cf. p. 365), to which he is devoting a major book, soon to be published by Oxford University Press.

In conclusion, Zoroastrian and Parsi studies is a treasure-trove of information which facilitates our understanding not only of the Zoroastrian religion, but also of the historical background of Christianity and, especially, of the Zoroastrians themselves.

ALMUT HINTZE
JÜRGEN WASIM FREMBGEN:
Reise zu Gott: Sufis und Derwische im Islam.

This book represents an extremely valuable addition to the scholarly literature of Sufi studies and will be of great value as both an introductory text to the subject and a reminder to more advanced researchers of the extraordinary diversity of style and substance which has typified Sufi history. While many existing introductory texts concentrate on figures from the ‘classical’ homelands of Sufism in Iraq and Khurasan, this study differs in that it surveys the whole of the Islamic world, from Sub-Saharan Africa across the Middle East to East Turkestan, with particular emphasis on the author’s main regions of specialization in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. However, what distinguishes this study most clearly from the considerable number of introductions to Sufism currently available is that it offers an account of Sufism from the perspective of the ethnographer as much as that of the historian. Herein lies the book’s greatest value.

For the most part, the history of Sufism as conceived in Western scholarship has been presented in one of two ways: either through the discussion of the lives of the ‘great men’ of Sufi tradition, often as perceived and evaluated through the textual evidence of their sometimes complex theoretical writings, with occasional (though often roundly criticized) attempts to form models of the institutionalization of Sufism into its characteristic orders (tariqas). The other, more essentialist, approach has been to present Sufism as a single system (or mode) of knowledge handed down, often with the help of vernacular traditions of love poetry, to its various practitioners over many centuries. While both approaches continue to complement each other in contributing much of great value to our understanding of Sufi history, both have ultimately failed to provide a convincing account of how Sufism managed to develop into the almost ubiquitous mass movement, present at all levels of Muslim society until modern times, which it became over time. For while accounts of complex Sufi metaphysicians hardly provide a convincing basis for the evolution of a tradition of mass appeal, descriptions of the power of love poetry at the other extreme have tended to over-emotionalize the ‘popular’ following of Sufism. Frembgen is wise in refraining from building an overarching model accounting for the many diverse developments in Sufi history, and the strength of his account is in its emphasis on the intelligibility of Sufism only when it is seen as being embedded in its wider social and cultural environments, linked by so many subtle threads to traditions of group identity, medicine, political resistance, folklore, social status and even humour. This approach also has the great advantage of rendering comprehensible the mass appeal, influence and longevity of Sufism by stressing the interdependence of the practice of Sufism with shrines and other supporting institutions and belief in the miraculous power of God’s chosen friends at all levels of society. Although due respect is paid to the great theorists of tasawwuf, the author’s ethnographical approach makes for an account of the traditions of Sufi and Dervish from the broader perspectives of the mass of its followers, occasional attendants and outright sceptics in Muslim societies at large, as opposed to the more ‘top-down’ perspective inevitable in studies emphasizing the roles of a narrow band of textual Sufi theorists. In this respect, then, the work may be considered to be in part a study of the much maligned category of ‘popular Sufism’. It is here, however, that it makes its greatest contribution to our
understanding of Sufism in unravelling the intelligibility and coherence of these traditions as forming a complex cultural system in their own right.

After a short introduction outlining the scale and scope of Sufi traditions, the book is divided into four main sections: the relationship of mystics and saints; orthodox (bi-shar') orders; ‘free’ (bi-shar') orders and ecstasies; and the diverse practices of Dervish life. Within these sections, the author discusses not only a wide variety of expressions of Sufism, but also provides sober accounts of such complex and often contested issues as the relationship of Sufism to politics (in pre-modern, colonial and present times), islamization (or ‘conversion’), shrine-cults, gender, sexuality and drugs. However, the most fascinating sections of the book describe the expression of Sufi piety in traditions of food, jewellery, dress and the many other manifestations of Sufi material culture. The author has explored the latter at greater length in his Kleidung und Ausrüstung islamischer Gottsucher: Ein Beitrag zur materiellen Kultur des Derwischwesens (Wiesbaden, 1999). Of similar interest is the material he presents on traditions of Dervish communities and popular entertainment. These sections, like much of the material drawn from the author’s own fieldwork, are all the more poignant for describing the richly varied Islamic heritage of pre-war Afghanistan.

The author’s emphasis on the social underpinnings of Sufi life—seen at its best in his discussion of the economic foundations of Sufism through the patronage of Sufi institutions, personal employment and begging—reflects the tenor of a considerable body of post-war German scholarship on Sufism, much of it in stark contrast to the more individualist emphasis of Anglo-Saxon and French work. Reise zu Gott is therefore also helpful for the non-specialist reader in drawing together much of this German tradition. The book assembles an impressive array of ethnographical and travellers’ accounts of Sufi practices stretching back some four centuries. This, along with a careful use of modern historical scholarship, lends the work a chronological depth that might otherwise be missing in an ethnographical survey. Nonetheless, scholars of earlier periods of Sufi history might be frustrated by the inevitable slant towards nineteenth- and twentieth-century evidence. Others, by contrast, might find this a helpful rectification of the emphasis of a great deal of work on Sufism on much earlier periods, and a timely reminder that Sufism has continued to be a dynamic force in Muslim societies through to the present day.

NILE GREEN

SOUTH ASIA


The seventh volume of K. R. Norman’s indispensable Collected papers on Pali and related topics roughly covers the 1990s. A number of book reviews are appended, covering O. von Hinüber’s monographs on the history of Pali; Colin Renfrew’s, J. P. Mallory’s, and A. Parpola’s contributions on the origin and migration of the Aryans; and Balbir’s Arasyaka-Studien and Oberlies’s accompanying Glossar, to which Norman adds valuable comments on several
of the glossary’s more difficult entries. The review of W. B. Bollée’s studies of the Jain Nijjutis (the heading accidentally omits the author’s name) also provides a large addendum to the glossaries. Norman tentatively supports Bollée’s etymology nijjuti:<nirvyukti: but derivation from nirvyukti, used in the sense of niyoga=prayoga, seems much more suitable, semantically and otherwise.

The article ‘When did the Buddha and the Jina die’ offers a rational reappraisal of the traditional evidence; and ‘Dialect variation in Old and Middle Indo-Aryan’ documents further discontinuities between Sanskrit and MIA. His ‘Asoka’s debt to his people’ draws conclusions from the distribution of references to the discharge of duty in the Asokan corpus, either Asoka’s duty to others (RE bhutanan ananiyam yeham) or theirs to him (SepE mama ananiyam ehatha). Application of the genitive case to the creditor is surely too well established for the latter phrase to convey ‘you [my ministers] will pay my debt’, as suggested on p. 72. In ‘Traces of the subjunctive’, notably those thought to subsist in the Asokan and Pali 2 pl. -atha, Norman prefers to attribute the vowel length to the influence of prosody and rhythm. The phenomenon, recalling the Rgvedic strong imperative dadhau, may, however, owe more to the semantic pressure of the 1 pl. imperative in -ama.

‘Masculine vocatives in -e in Pali’ addresses itself to the theme of those -e vocatives that have been described as Magadhisms (Geiger) or as feminine nicknames (CPD). Norman accepts the notion of nicknames in -a, while conceding that the commentaries do not really justify any such belief (p. 29), and also, when that explanation seems inapplicable, a notion of honorific plurals in -a, again conceding that only honorific titles in the manner of acarya can be attested. One might rather suggest that -a vocatives that are metrically long (as in the Rgveda) have been altered by analogy with brahme, rāje, ise, etc.: hence the Triṣṭubh-opening Takkāriye and (converting an Aṣṭā opening into the semblance of a Triṣṭubh) Cāle Upacāle. This vocative was then extended, via the locution Takkāriyamāno, to names that look like feminines: Pilotikam Paribhājakam, Bhesikam Nahāpitaṇa, Medakathāliko antivāṣt, and *Godho Sakko, (hence Ghaṭāya Sakkasa?).

‘Solitary as a rhinoceros horn’ reasserts this as the commentators’ view of the matter, although it seems unlikely that Nidd II 129 has this sense. The khaggavisāna is an emblem of solitary grazing (eko care), and its name is explained as ‘(one-)horned Khagga’, to make the point that the Paccekabuddha is similarly unhampered (muttabandhana). The tassadiso refers more naturally back to the emphasized khaggassa nāma: ‘As the rhinoceros has one single horn, so he, being individually enlightened, should go his way in life properly, like it, as one single individual rid-of-encumbrances’. The Jain version, however, agrees with later commentators.

‘A comparative study of Asoka’s Second Separate Edict’ assesses the contribution of the recently discovered Sannati version. The appended translation offers alternatives, where the versions part company: but in (B), the insertion of ‘indeed’ for Jaugada seems to be an oversight (since its kam kam is ‘by diptography’). In (G), it is not clear why the superfluous ca of Dh-J is preferred to the va of Sa (after mamam nimittam). The conclusions drawn concentrate upon points of orthography, but diction must also have a bearing on any attempt to reconstruct an Urtext. Sannati’s orthography may be past praying for, but its wording may sometimes help to identify pointless padding: in (G), Norman’s translation follows tacitly, but rightly, Dh-Sa ca and Dh eva, against J ca me and J-Sa eva ca.

‘Adopting the domestic way of life’ supports Brough’s reading of Dhp
vissam dharmam as *veśmadharman (Uv. veśmadharmān). Accepting that it is a compound, Norman is also willing to understand a plural on the strength of the Uv. reading; but Pali -am could hardly convey so unobvious a connotation. It is odd that there is no mention of the development -sm-> -ms- (ramsi) on p. 85. Accidental replacement of *visma- by visam- (SN E*), corrected to vissam (Dhp and Spk), alongside the gloss *visma->visama in Dhp-a, seems possible.

In ‘Does Māra have flower-tipped arrows’, discussing Dhp 46 (GDhp. 300) Mārassa papuppahakāṇi, Norman rejects the later implication of flower-arrows, and follows others in understanding ‘cutting off the flowery blossoms’. Epic (sam)pra-pusāta confirms that the prefix is verse-filling; but the ‘flowers’ that are to be ‘cut down’ are, in the adjacent verse GDhp. 294 (Dhp 47–48, MBh. 12.169.13, 17), the wayside flowers that distract one’s attention from the approaching cataclysm of death. This would be an appropriate item to interpose between equally figurative expressions that amount to ‘the insubstantiality of existence’ and ‘avoidance of Hades’. The fact that MBh. expands the two hemistichs of GDhp. into two verses, while the Pali substantially conflates GDhp. *kurute vasam with the MBh. version ādiya gacchati, tells against Brough’s inference that a verse was lost in GDhp.

A study of two Rathoddhata passages in Lakkkhaṇa-suttanta (DN III, 152 and 155) provides, for the first time, metrically corrected texts. Despite the translation offered, each one describes a present-tense reward for a past good deed. In the second passage (here misleadingly conjoined as vv. 4–8), the deed occupies one verse and the reward four verses, instead of one half-verse and two and a half verses; and the present-tense reward includes āsa and āhu, present-perfect in meaning, and narrating the acquisition of two physical characteristics. This is less neat than the perfect-present ādu that explains their significance in vv. 2–3.

v. 1ab. The notes seem to envisage four sorts of nourishment (p. 96), but a Sanskrit commentary on lehyam quoted in BRD (rasāsvādaṇa niṇīryate, dravībhātām) confirms that the gerund-gerundive construction involves only two kinds, khāḍyabhōjya ‘eaten chewed’ and lehyasaśvāya ‘relished supped’. Similarly, the DN prose narrative offers two noun phrases (... bhojanīyānam, ... pāṇānam ‘food and drink’). The Sv commentary latches on to bhojana as a noun, but foolishly drops pāṇa and strews in three conjunctions. Since the two expressions are in fact adjectival, pāṇa a is scarcely syntactically ‘floating’ (p. 101 ‘[There were] all sorts of food’), but is in apposition with compounded rasa-, again as implied by the rasita khāḍaniya bhojaniya of the prose, and as Rhys Davids had construed the line. The rendering ‘best giver of excellent flavours’ is quaint as a qualification for Superman status: rasada means ‘giver of essences (Rhys Davids), physician (MBh, 12.121.44)’, hence ‘supreme purveyor of finest essences, solid and liquid’.

v. 2cd. The reward on earth (bhojarasa-lābhita) is more banal. The culinary use of the word vyayājana might well have arisen from reinterpretation of the term vyayājanaṇimittakovida ‘fortune-teller’, in view of its association here with the prediction of gastronomic delight.

v. 3b. We can happily read pabbajam pi ca tadā and (a)dhigacchati, understanding tad- in ās as the verb’s object, referring to heavenly reward and prosperous rebirth (and not to food, as the translation seems to imply). Thus we need not rely upon the oddity ānubh(āv)i=anvabh(āv)i to justify a tad ādhigacchati, awkwardly following upon tam and tad- in the previous line.

v. 3cd. Despite the second passage, which understands lay and clerical alternatives, the prediction, from two auspicious physical characteristics, is of
a prosperous career and subsequent renunciation: ‘It is predicted that he will be very well-fed, and will sever all domestic ties’. A reverse Karmadhārṇāya ‘lābhi-r-uttamam (postulated in deference to B⁷!), is hardly credible, especially when the commentary (E⁷!) preserves ‘lābhim. The corrupt reading attempts to take ‘lābhi as the subject of uttaman, under the impression that the uttama in 1b uttam aggarasadyaka qualifies bhojjam ... aggarasa- as the object of dāyako. In B⁸, the commentary on 1b registers this as an alternative rendering.

This volume of Collected papers, like its predecessors, identifies a number of long-standing problems in Middle Indian studies and, using recent discoveries and insights, points the way towards satisfactory and definitive solutions.

J. C. WRIGHT

LUCIAN SCHERMAN:

For its fortieth invaluable publication the Glasenapp Foundation has turned its attention to reprinting the principal minor works of the Indologist and ethnologist Lucian Scherman (1864–1946). Born in Prussian Poznań, and a student of Stenzler in Breslau and of Ernst Kuhn in Munich, he was eventually, until 1933, Professor of Asian Ethnology and founding Director of the Museum für Völkerkunde in Munich. Exile in America enabled him, as a ‘Volljude’, to survive the war.

Two early Indological monographs, a dissertation and a habilitation, occupy more than a third of the bulk of the volume. The first, mainly carried out at the age of twenty, was a study of the Vedic cosmogonic hymns (RV 10 and AV), annotated also with references to parallel passages from the Upanisads. It was used by Geldner and Whitney: Geldner consistently marks a step forward, but Scherman would clearly have produced a more useful annotated version of the AV than Whitney achieved.

The second monograph is a survey of Vedic, Buddhist, and Puranic visions of Purgatory and, ‘weit monotonier und interesseloser’, of an adjacent Paradise. He linked a rationalist Cānaka verse (Kl. Schr., p. 114: krodha vaivasvato devah ... ‘Yama is wrath, the Vaitaranī River is thirst, the Kānadughā Dhenu is knowledge, Paradise is contentment’) with the similar substitution of a personified Krodha for Yama in the Bhrigu story (SBr. 11.6.1.13 puruṣah ... dandapānih ... krodhaḥ), next door to Varuṇa’s wish-fulfilling Heaven (JBr. 1.42–44). Instructively, he associated this with the Naciketas story, with its comparable motifs of fatal anger and saving ritual knowledge.

His interest expending itself rather on comparative folklore than on closer analysis of the texts, it did not strike him that his starting-point (p. 111), Weber’s treatment of the description of retribution for past Himsā in SBr. 11.6.1, is problematic. Its visions of human sacrifice and cannibalism are differently worded, and Delbrück (followed, inconsistently, by Eggeling) had already rejected Weber’s recourse to the ‘vibhajyamānāḥ’ of the commentary: trees and cattle were in fact dissecting (vibhajyamānāḥ) their victims, whereas plants and waters were the victims being consumed (adyamānāḥ). We must
infer that trees and animals were the first to be deemed likely to object to man’s abuse, and that plants and waters were added by someone who indeed had understood a passive vibhajya- and coupled it with an agent purusaisi and awkward esām (presumably in lieu of purusānām). The context requires not an enactment of past crimes on earth, but a scene of present retribution (with idam iha prati sacāmāh iti rightly taken by the commentary as pratisacāmaka ‘here and now we are requiting’). This crucially contradicts Weber’s (and Scherman’s) notion of the incorporation of a ready-made story, ‘dem Munde des Volks entlehnt’ and rendered puerile by its use in a ritual context. The JBr. version arrives more nearly at a dramatization of the Cānākya verse.

Buddhist iconography is represented by several articles from 1924–32, and by the identification in 1939 of panels depicting the presentation of clean grass on Gautama’s arrival at the Bodhi-tree (as mentioned in Buddhacarita). In his last years he offered (in JAOS) his personal assessments of Indian religion and culture in the guise of marginal notes on two cultural syntheses, Coomaraswamy’s small-scale Hinduism and Buddhism and Kroeber’s large-scale Configurations of cultural growth. His last publication was an essay on the background to the ‘Siddha’ script symbols that survive in Japanese iconography.

His many ethnological studies grew out of a period of fieldwork in 1910–11: a month in Ceylon, six weeks in South India, eight months in Burma, and three months en route from Shillong to Peshawar and back to Ellora. Photographically illustrated descriptions of the Nilgiri tribes, Toda, Kota, and Badaga are complemented by a later study of the Kurumba, Irula, and Paniyan. Ethnographic studies of Burmese tribal dress, ritual, dwellings and textiles, and technical studies of Burmese bronze casting and of Javanese batik, all well illustrated, were widely scattered hitherto in various journals and commemorative volumes.

This carefully produced and indexed collective reprint is a worthy tribute to one whose efforts on behalf of both scholarly research and popular dissemination were admirable and tireless. A few JAOS photographs really ought to have been spread over two pages, rather than reduced like the text. Otherwise the only regret is that the bibliographical format of the Glasenapp series was changed, so that there is a Table of Contents that serves no very useful purpose, and a Bibliography where the new pagination needs to stand out more boldly.

J. C. WRIGHT

ERNST WINDISCH:

The forty-first volume of the Glasenapp Foundation’s series of collected papers of German Indologists has been devoted to Ernst Windisch, who taught Sanskrit and Comparative and Celtic Philology, mainly in Leipzig, in the decades prior to the First World War. Besides his masterly study of evolution of the Italo-Celtic -r passive (ASGW, 1887), the articles cover a very wide range of Indological topics, linguistic, literary, and philosophical.

Windisch stressed, and did much to meet, the need for integration of Pali
and Sanskrit, Buddhist and Brahmanical studies. His ‘Brahmanischer Einfluss im Buddhismus’ (Festschrift Kuhn, 1916) and ‘Die Komposition des Mahāvastu’ (ASGW, 1909) constitute a primer for every Indologist on the art of tracing the development from primitive coherent episodes in one tradition to great epic narratives in another (‘quid sit pulchrum quid turpe quid utile quid non’). His canvassing of the possibility of a Magadhi substratum for the linguistic ‘Compromiss’ that the Pali literature of the south represents (‘Über den sprachlichen Charakter des Pali’, IOC, 1905) may not get us very far, but it is hardly so downright ‘verfehlt’ as the editors baldly dub it.

The manuscript of Hemacandra’s verse manual of lay Jainism called Yogaśāstra (edited and provisionally translated in ZDMG, 1874) presumably came to his attention through his brief association with Eggeling and Haas at the India Office Library. His collation (JPTS, 1890) of a Burmese manuscript, also from the IOL, provided corrections for the 1948 reprint of the PTS edition of the Udāna, but it includes many other instructive variants. His comparison of Tīttirajātaka 438 with the Puranic versions (Festgabe Weber, 1896) assumed, too rashly, that priority lies with the euhemerism of the latter (‘today’s meeting on Meru’ in lieu of girāggaśamajjasadisa chaṇa).

Windisch showed (BSGW, 1891) that the Rigvedic phrases śīrṣān krātavah / śīrṣān krātavah cannot be locating ‘Geisteskraft’, the faculty of reasoning, in the head (as opposed to the heart); but this has been unjustly ignored. Geldner has for 2.16.2 ‘im Haupte die Überlegung’ and for 8.96.3 ‘ausschliesslich in Indra’s Haupt sind die Gedanken’, where Śāyaṇa must be nearer the mark with vijñāna and darśanapranādi karman, thus associating kratu with indriya. His protest (Festgruss Roth, 1893) against the notion that Rigvedic chariot racing symbolizes a bardic contest, rather than relevantly (with Śāyaṇa) the conveyance of thought, word, and deed to the gods, was expressly rejected by Geldner, who preferred to falsify the evidence from the outset (2.31.1 ‘Unseren Wagen bevorzuget’ for asmākam avatam rātham). Unlike Windisch, Geldner failed to appreciate the primacy of Book 9’s chariot imagery.

An essay on possible Greek influence on Sanskrit drama (IOC, 1882) remains a useful catalogue of often significant analogies with New Attic Comedy; and a companion paper (BSGW, 1885) sees Mṛchakatika as an amalgamation of this same romantic drama with political motifs drawn from the Kṛṣṇa legend (the young cowherd pretender to the throne who is taken from the ghoṣa and imprisoned; Windisch might have mentioned that a ‘Māthura’, as well as a would-be ‘Vāsudeva’, feature as characters in the romantic plot).

The short monograph Über das Nyaẏabhaṣya (1888) is a valuable introduction to the basic texts of what he preferred to call Indian dialectics; and he has also usefully traced the evolution of the story of the soul’s fate after death in Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads (BSGW, 1907). He gave some sound advice on the value of Sanskrit literature, both for the ‘thinking man’ and for Lutheran missionaries, in the text of addresses delivered in 1897 and 1895.

The indexes live up to the high standards of the series, though RV 8, 85 needed to be indexed as 8, 85 (96). A very obvious batch of computer misprints on p. xi has come through unscathed; and the series has yet to come to terms with its unhappy resolve to split the bibliography in two. Reversing the procedure of Bd. 40, the Table of Contents does mercifully include the publication details; but now the new pagination has been dropped altogether from the full Bibliography.

J. C. WRIGHT
MUDAGAMUWE MAITHRIMURTHI:
Wohlwollen, Mitleid, Freude und Gleichmut: eine ideengeschichtliche
Untersuchung der vier apramānas in der buddhistischen Ethik und
Spiritualität von den Anfängen bis hin zum frühen Yogācāra.
443 pp. (Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien, 50.) Stuttgart: Franz
Steiner Verlag, 1999.

The monograph under review constitutes a revised version of a doctoral
dissertation submitted by Maithrimurthi to the Fachbereich Orientalistik der
Universität Hamburg in 1998. Broadly speaking, the work falls into two parts.
The first consists of a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the conceptual
and spiritual content of four Buddhist practices subsumed under the
title apramāna/brahmavihāra (pp. 13–214) as portrayed in mainstream
Buddhist sources. In the second part, Maithrimurthi provides an analysis
of the apramāna in early Yogācāra literature, including critical editions
and translations of key passages from the Yogācārabhiṣamānyasa
Mahāyānasūtraśāstra (pp. 176–426). In addition to the examination of the
individual practices (pp. 47–160), the first part also includes two very useful
discussions focusing, first, on the meaning and historical evolution of the
terms apramāna and brahmavihāra, including their various formulae, drawing
on both pre-Buddhist and early (mainly Pali) Buddhist literature (pp. 13–46),
and, second, on the definitions of the apramāna provided in the
Abhidharmakośa and Visuddhimagga (pp. 187–214). The first part
also includes a critique of H. B. Aronson’s seminal study of the
brahmavihāra (Love
and sympathy in Therava
da Buddhism, Delhi, 1980), exposing a number of
serious flaws in its methodology, premises and conception (pp. 161–86).
The second part, in addition to a detailed evaluation of their content,
contains lengthy quotations from the Śrāvakabhūmi (Sanskrit, Tibetan),
Bodhisattvabhūmi (Sanskrit), Mahāyānasūtraśāstra (Sanskrit) and
*Asvabhāva’s commentary (ṭīkā) on the Mahāyānasūtraśāstra (Tibetan), as
well as their respective German translations (pp. 276–426).

Even the most cursory glance at the acknowledgements reveals immediately
that the author had the privilege to benefit from a notably thorough and
inspiring Buddhist Studies education in the West. Trained at Hamburg
University by L. Schmithausen, D. Seyfort Ruegg, S. A. Srinivasan and
A. Wezler, to name only some of Maithrimurthi’s best-known teachers, his
work is firmly rooted in the classical German Buddhological tradition, shaped
by philological rigour and carefully framed historical, text-critical analysis.
Maithrimurthi positions himself firmly within this school, arguing that its
methodologies confer on ‘(ihre) Thesen durch Belege wenigstens eine gewisse
Überprüfbareit und damit auch eine gewisse Wahrscheinlichkeit’ while its
critics discharge themselves from ‘der lästigen Pflicht der philologischen Belege
ihrer Thesen ohne ... entsprechenden Ersatz zur Absicherung ihrer Thesen
beizubringen. ... So hat ihre Arbeitsweise immer etwas Willkürliches und
Unterwürgbares’ (p. 8). These are strong words that will not be appreciated
in every quarter. However, the author, evidently himself in full command of
his sources, demonstrates again and again just how valuable this classical
approach can be.

On every page this study brims with insightful observations and convincing
models of interpretation, spanning Indian religious thought from Vedic times
to the early Yogācāra. For example, the author’s attempt to define and
establish the conceptual content of the term *brahmavihāra* (which he translates as ‘brahmic states of mind/contemplation’) is informed by passages from the *Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads, Dharmāśtras*, Pali canonical sources and their commentaries. The analysis of the origins, scope and application of the terms *metta/maitrī, karunā, muditā* and *upekkhā/supeksā* is based on a whole range of sources, mainly extrapolated from the nikāya of the Pali canon. The interpretations pay particular attention to the contexts in which these terms appear, and Maithrimurthi thus achieves a carefully nuanced account of their role in early Buddhism. For instance, the discussion of *maitrī* (benevolence) distinguishes between: (1) basic friendliness; (2) motherly love; (3) the ethical dimensions of benevolence; (4) benevolence as self-protection; (5) its soteriological aspects as well as *maitrī*s; (6) karmic annulation effect (Karma-Tilgungseffekt) (pp. 47–114). The discussion of *maitrī*, doubtlessly inspired by Schmithausen’s earlier work on Buddhist ethics, is the most detailed. The three remaining practices, that is, compassion (*karunā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upeksā*), feature less frequently in the nikāya and hence receive a more succinct treatment limited to their historical backgrounds, soteriological roles and specific functions within the *apramāṇa* complex. As in the preceding section, here too, Maithrimurthi’s findings and observations are adeptly framed by (and juxtaposed to) the views of other scholars, most notably Bronkhorst, Cousins, Gethin, Gombrich, Griffiths, King, Schmithausen and Vetter. It appears that research carried out by Schmithausen and Vetter on early Buddhist practice was particularly formative for Maithrimurthi’s views, since I did not find a single instance where, in cases of overlap, his exegesis differed substantively from their interpretations.

Readers familiar with scholarly publications on early Buddhist practice will have noticed that the Buddhologist who has written most extensively on the *brahmavihāra*, H. B. Aronson, is not mentioned in the above enumeration. His work is the focus of the next chapter, where Maithrimurthi questions, with good reason, several of Aronson’s premises about early Buddhism which led him to attribute to Theravāda Buddhism a system of altruistic ethics for which there appears to be little evidence in the canon. While Maithrimurthi does not dispute that the practice of the *brahmavihāra* may be conducive to social engagement, in particular among the laity, he refutes Aronson’s assertion that such altruistic engagement played a significant role in the practice of early or Theravāda Buddhism, that is, in the ideals and conduct of the monks and nuns (p. 162). He argues, drawing in part on the work of Schopen, that the monks’ social activities were, above all, motivated by a desire to increase monastic prosperity, and not by some higher form of altruism (pp. 163–5). Maithrimurthi also casts doubt on Aronson’s (re)interpretation of King’s and Spiro’s characterization of ‘kammic’ and ‘nipphanic’ Buddhism which he formulates (according to Maithrimurthi) in order to remove the label ‘nipphanic’ from Theravāda Buddhism (pp. 174–85). He argues that, in early Buddhism, there is no real conflict between egotism and altruism, since it expounds quite clearly that one becomes capable of helping others only after becoming liberated oneself (p. 183). The polarization between these two terms evolved much later (even in early Yogācāra, *svārtha* and *parārtha* are still equally valued) and does not feature in the canonical writings (p. 184). Maithrimurthi attributes these misrepresentations to, inter alia, Aronson’s failure to take into account (and differentiate between) the various historical strata found in the sources he used to substantiate his views: ‘Das Problem seiner Herangehensweise ist jedoch, daß er zwar in seiner Einleitung durchaus unterscheidet zwischen kanonisch und post-kanonisch, aber in seiner
Maithrimurthi concludes his discussion of the apramāna in mainstream Buddhist literature with a study of their expositions in the Abhidharmakosa and Visuddhimagga. These texts, composed by Vasubandhu and Buddhaghosa respectively, originated during the first part of the fifth century C.E. Although both texts contain much valuable information, because they were composed with different objectives (the Abhidharmakosa is more concerned with theory while the Visuddhimagga is primarily practice-oriented), Maithrimurthi’s discussion is largely contrastive and somewhat lacking in conclusions. On the other hand, he manages to trace apramāna development beyond the canonical phase and to contextualize their practice in the wider framework of Buddhist meditation (pp. 197–202) and soteriology (pp. 202–10). Here, it is perhaps worth noting that Frauwallner’s hypothesis of the existence of two Vasubandhus (which Maithrimurthi appears to accept, at least implicitly) was recently convincingly challenged by Peter Skilling (‘Vasubandhu and the Vyākhāyukti literature’, JIABS, 23/2, 2000, 310–14).

The editions and translations of the aforementioned Yogaśāstra works are prefixed by a detailed analysis of their content (pp. 215–73). The passages cited from the Sravakabhumi deal only with the meditative cultivation of maitri, discussed in the context of the five preparatory exercises aimed at the elimination of the three root poisons (rāga, dvesa, mohā). The other apramāna do not feature at all in the Sravakabhumi. Significantly, but perhaps not surprisingly given the early date of this text, its exposition of maitri follows largely the salvic scheme of pre-Mahāyāna Buddhism (p. 233). In contrast, the apramāna passage of the Bodhisattvabhumi is wholly Mahāyāna in orientation, expounding the role of the four practices in the bodhisattva training. Here, greatest importance is given to the practice of karunā (p. 235), closely followed by maitri (p. 237), while muditā andupeksā are only secondary in rank. The Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra, building on the exposition in the Bodhisattvabhumi, contains the most developed account of the apramāna, devoting half a chapter to their practice. With even greater emphasis than in the Bodhisattvabhumi, the scope and practice of the apramāna are now fully governed by Mahāyāna perspectives. Key importance is accorded to karunā; maitri serves to reinforce and complement karunā (p. 271), while muditā and upekṣā are largely ignored (p. 272). These changes in the ranking of the individual apramāna reflect not only the chronology of these three texts, but also attest to the phased and gradual evolution of Indian Buddhist thought.

The editions and translations of the apramāna passages from the Sravakabhumi, Bodhisattvabhumi and Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra bear all the hallmarks of meticulous, perceptive scholarship. In all three cases, Maithrimurthi consulted original Sanskrit manuscripts, as available, and modern editions, including two Tibetan bsTan ’gyur versions (Derge, Peking) and the respective Chinese translations. The texts and translations are carefully annotated, giving variant readings, explanatory material and cross-references in the footnotes. Although the passages from the Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra are already available in French, Maithrimurthi’s translation provides new depth and context, not least through the inclusion of *Asvabhāva’s commentary.
In short, this study of the apramāna complex is a fine example of what classical Buddhology is able to achieve. The author’s acute doctrinal understanding, sound philological skills, keen historical perception and thorough acquaintance with a wide range of Buddhist literature render his investigation a mature and insightful piece of scholarship that will retain its value for many years to come.

ULRICH PAGEL

FREDA MATCHETT:
Kṛṣṇa: lord or avatāra? The relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu in the context of the avatāra myth as presented by the Harivaṃśa, the Viṣṇupurāṇa and the Bhāgavatapurāṇa.

The author of this book came to Indian studies in a roundabout way. Having taken a degree in French at Oxford (1947), she obtained an appointment in biblical studies at Hockerill College of Education, while studying for her B.D. degree at London University. Extending her perception of the field of religious studies, she eventually enlisted at Lancaster University to read Sanskrit and Indian religions for an M.A., whereupon she specialized in Purānic studies. After her return from a study stay in India in 1982 she started attending the annual Symposium on Indian Religions while they were still being convened by the reviewer (1974–84) and thereafter. She used this forum to present a sample of her research efforts, ‘The pervasiveness of Bhakti in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa’, at the 13th Symposium in 1987. This piece revealed her patient scholarship and the attention she gives to narrative details in her sources. I included its reworked version when editing the collection of Symposia papers Love divine. Studies in bhakti and devotional mysticism (Durham Indological Series No. 3), Richmond: Curzon, 1993. In the meantime she earned her Ph.D. in 1990 and her thesis became the basis for the present book which she finished in retirement, while attached to the Department of Religious Studies at Lancaster University as an Honorary Research Fellow.

The title and subtitle express clearly the scope of the book, which also deals with a number of concomitant issues. Thus in the first chapter (pp. 8–9) she tries to clarify the notion of avatāra (lit. ‘descent’, usually translated as ‘incarnation’, sometimes as ‘manifestation’) by distinguishing ‘primal myths’ of individual stories incorporated into the sequence of the ten avatāras of Viṣṇu and the ‘avatāra myth itself’ which is ‘a secondary myth, doctrinal or ideological in character and purpose’. Consistently applied, this distinction would amount to regarding all theology as ‘secondary mythology’. Matchett does feel some unease about this and ponders the term ‘avatāra doctrine’ as perhaps ‘more appropriate’, but seduced by the narrative presentation of the materials in the purāṇas, she settles for the notion of ‘doctrinal myth’, which she unfortunately incorporated into the subtitle of her book and which she considered to be applicable also to the doctrine of trimūrti. To be sure, the stories of the ten individuals in the scheme of daśāvatāra are myths, but linking them together and subordinating them to the highest deity is a theological exercise, as is the linking of the three most revered gods, Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva into a trinity, even if it is expressed in the context of narrative mythology. To take a biblical parallel (as the author occasionally does in her
endnotes), we might regard the stories in Genesis involving God, the New Testament stories from the life of Jesus and the appearances of the Holy Ghost as myths, but the dogma of Trinity based on these stories is certainly a theological doctrine which developed over a number of centuries. The *avatāra* doctrine emerged slowly from earlier mythological sources, such as the Buddhist notion of repeated appearances of Buddhas in different ages of world history and has perhaps its earliest source in the ancient Vedic myth of the Goddess Aditi who represented the pre-creational Absolute and gave birth to all gods, humans, other creatures and all that is, and subsequently was born into the world as a daughter of the god Daksā, one of her foremost sons called Adityas.

The author is at her best when she keeps to interpreting *purānic* texts and Harivamśa within their own contexts. She rightly treats her three sources as integral wholes even while pursuing her particular theme when comparing the ‘three versions of the *avatāra* drama’. Harivamśa, the last book of the epic Mahābhārata which also contains the well-known Bhagavadgītā where Kṛṣṇa shows himself to be the supreme deity, is rightly regarded as a transitional text by the author in which Kṛṣṇa’s role as a subordinate *avatāra* of Viṣṇu emerges, although not without being foreshadowed in some passages of the main Mahābhārata text. This is a simple statement, but the process of this transition is described by the author in minutest detail and painstakingly documented through references to the texts and extensive endnotes in two chapters, a method evident throughout the book.

The Viṣṇupurāṇa is primarily the glorification of the god whose name it bears, as the supreme deity and, indeed, as both transcendent and immanent Absolute identical with the Upaniṣadic *brahman*. Kṛṣṇa is just the convenient and effective focal point for *bhaktas* on the path to salvation as ‘a tiny share of Viṣṇu’ (p. 94) which pushes the other *avatāras* into the background. The author, following Charlotte Vaudeville, calls the chapter dealing with the Bhāgavatapurāṇa ‘The Bible of Kṛṣṇaism’; perhaps one could call it the ‘Bible of bhaktiism’. The author shows convincingly how, using various literary devices, the Bhāgavatapurāṇa sets out to place itself above the Viṣṇupurāṇa in importance and authority within the Viṣṇuva tradition, not least also by its extended and comprehensive treatment of the traditional *purānic* themes, such as the cosmic, earthly and dynastic histories and the Lord’s role in them, his grace and the forms in which he manifests himself throughout the ages. In the end it establishes Kṛṣṇa, not Viṣṇu, at the centre of its universe. Kṛṣṇa thus becomes ‘identified with the Cosmic Man (*purusā*) who comprises yet transcends the universe’ (p. 148). Here one is reminded of the Rgvedic *purusā sūkta* (RV 10.90) which the author points out in the penultimate chapter. But it is just one of the many Rgvedic echoes in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa.

The glorification of Kṛṣṇa as the Lord in the Bhāgavatapurāṇa is further underlined by the small importance given in it to the list of *avatāras* which the author discusses in the penultimate chapter. Five different lists are presented, none conforming to the standard list of ten *avatāras*, while two lists are considerably longer. One is even in the form of a hymn of praise sung by gods to Kṛṣṇa when he was still in his mother’s womb and enumerates his (Kṛṣṇa’s) various appearances as *avatāra*. This may be an early textual reminder that the *daśāvatāra* list is, in fact, only one feature of the *avatāra* doctrine which is flexible and always has had and still has wider applications. There are important and lifelong as well as lesser and temporary incarnations and it is a living doctrine still. This reminds me of a day (13 January 1976)
when I arrived in the Ponnalai temple dedicated to Krṣṇa in Moolai village in the Tamil northern part of the then peaceful Sri Lanka when the community was celebrating Krṣṇa’s birthday. To my surprise I was greeted by the chief brahmin with reverence and given a place of honour during the special pūjā and in the procession which paraded the divine effigy round the temple and its surroundings. It was later explained to me that my arrival was seen as a special favour on the part of Krṣṇa who had sent a guest for the occasion and through him participated in the celebration of his own birthday; thus I was a part-incarnation of his for a day. (I do not feel, in retrospect, that I was enacting an episode of the ‘avatāra myth’, while I can see that my arrival on the auspicious day may have fitted in with the Hindu community’s understanding of the lesser aspects of the avatāra doctrine.)

How does the author answer the question in the title of her last chapter ‘The supreme reality: Krṣṇa or Viṣṇu?’ Wisely, she does not take sides. It all depends on your point of view. The texts are sometimes definite in one way or another and at other times ambiguous or vacillating. A sectarian believer may have a definite answer, but within the wider context of Hinduism the issue need not be decided, not even by Hindus themselves. As the author maintains in her conclusion, ‘Krṣṇa and Viṣṇu are ... both contenders for the title of Supreme God’ and she admits that ‘the avatāra framework (what a relief she does not say ‘avatāra myth’) allowed much more flexibility than might have seemed likely at first sight’. I would add that it still allows it.

Despite betraying its origin in a sequence of research projects, one or two previously published in article form, the chapters are neatly put together so that the book makes for fluent and good reading suitable even for the general reader interested in the theme. As a scholarly work it will remain for a long time indispensable for anybody diving into the vastness and perplexity of purāṇic literature, in a part of which she has left useful signposts for guidance.

KAREL WERNER

J. DUNCAN M. DERRETT:
The Bible and the Buddhists.

The title of this work is not entirely misleading, in that discussion of the sources for passages in the New Testament can hardly ignore the Old, but it is the question of Buddhism’s bearing upon the New Testament which predominates here. Indeed, the very useful index to biblical references on pp. 125–31, while spanning both parts of the Christian Bible and some of the Apocrypha and other writings in between, shows clearly that it is the Gospels, and especially that of St. John, which are most frequently discussed—while the Johannine epistles and those of Jude and James, as it turns out, have apparently never been accused of Buddhist influences. For, as the introductory section of this study makes admirably clear, its agenda has largely been set by earlier controversies, especially those that flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which seem to have gained new life in recent decades.

Equally clearly outlined in the introductory portion are some of the manifold uncertainties engendered by the nature of our source materials. The canonical New Testament may have in due course gathered into one corpus
the earliest Christian materials, but the textual integrity of this ensemble as reflecting the original state of those materials is open to a certain amount of question. The same applies with at least as much force to canonical Buddhist materials even of Theravāda derivation, to say nothing of the early literature of what was to call itself the Greater Vehicle, which twentieth-century research has identified as stemming from an environment more likely to have seen some interaction with the earliest stages of Christianity. The tone of the work throughout, therefore, is judicious and undogmatic, even though the listing of possible parallels, accompanied with provisional suggestions as to the directions of apparent influence, runs to fifty-five items without claiming to be exhaustive—further case studies from the same author may, we learn, be expected.

They will be welcomed, for there is a wealth of erudition on display here (some of it unfortunately rather hard to retrieve, in the absence of an index or a fully comprehensive bibliography) which it has taken more than the span of a working career to amass. Even so, it would probably take a working retirement yet longer than a career to master all the materials on the Buddhist side which might be called into evidence. It is noticeable, for example, that the Lotus Sutra is alluded to here far more frequently than any other sources of comparable date, perhaps because it was already well known at the time of the initial controversies, but the Buddhist literature of roughly the same period that may now be consulted is much more extensive. There would seem to be no reference, for example, to the very useful corpus of materials translated from Chinese by Chavannes, the bulk of which was published while the controversy first raged, but when Chinese sources were not as highly regarded as of late.

For now the situation is even more favourable to the type of exploration undertaken here. The newly discovered materials from Afghanistan now in the British Library and elsewhere and the very early Chinese translations now being investigated by Paul Harrison and others all are rather likely to stem from precisely the environment where Greek rule had lately interposed itself between the Indian and Mediterranean worlds and where Buddhist and Gospel stories may have been propagated simultaneously. For even if there is no specific evidence for the author’s notion that ‘confabulations’ may have taken place between proponents of the two religions, the more diffuse circulation of scraps of religious wisdom seems enough of a possibility to make the venture worthwhile. And as is well known, there is no denying in any case that early in Christian history, a good century before the New Testament canon took its final shape, Clement of Alexandria refers to the Buddha briefly, but quite explicitly (p. 99).

This is, then, a topic that is unlikely to go away, even if the author’s conclusion that only matters of presentation rather than basic doctrine are likely to have been affected by any exchanges would seem to be reasonably sound. The nature of all the evidence is not such that any particular instance of supposed borrowing can be proved beyond all doubt, but that is no reason against trying to weigh up the probabilities after the fashion demonstrated here, especially since one day fresh material may come to light advancing the argument beyond what is currently possible. Until that happens, the setting of exemplary standards for further discussion has been a task concisely achieved by the volume under review, and no one in future would be wise to venture into this area of research without taking full account of its perspectives and methods.

T. H. Barrett
CATHERINE A. ROBINSON:
Tradition and liberation: the Hindu tradition in the Indian women’s movement.

The book under review traces the history of the Indian women’s movement from the British Raj to the present, showing how the ideology of the movement changed and showing the sources of this ideology. There are broadly two phases in this development, a ‘first wave’ Indian women’s movement from the nineteenth century to the 1970s and a ‘second wave’ from then to the present. The former focused on ‘women’s uplift’ and equal rights in order that women could play a larger role in public life and thus enhance the welfare of the nation, the latter on both ‘rights’ and ‘empowerment’. Catherine Robinson describes the origins of the ideology of equal rights in a very interesting way, locating this discourse in figures such as John Ruskin ‘who upheld the moral and spiritual excellence of true womanhood’ (p. 12) and John Stuart Mill who argued for the ‘natural equality of women’. Ruskin saw men and women as having different but complementary natures and roles. Robinson shows how this idea influenced the ‘women’s uplift’ ideology and created a discourse facing towards both a British and an Indian audience.

In six chronologically ordered chapters, Robinson demonstrates how these ideas play out in the complex ideological and political field of the colonized and then emergent nation. She focuses principally on the relationship between the Indian women’s movement and the Hindu tradition. She begins with an account of Hindu reformers Roy and Vidyasagar, and their concerns with sati and widow remarriage which resulted in legislation prohibiting sati and allowing remarriage. Chapter ii traces the early emergence of the women’s movement, focusing particularly on Ramabai Ranade (1862–1924, the wife of Mahedev Govind Ranade) and Sarala Devi Choudurani (1872–1945). Ranade was active in women’s associations founded by men, such as the Arya Mahila Samaj, the latter herself founded a women’s organization, the Bharat Stree Mahamandal. The idea of ‘women’s uplift’ drew on Hindu values for its justification, and ch. iii focuses on the leading figures Annie Besant (1847–1933) and Sarojini Naidu (1879–1949). They appealed to a ‘golden age’ of India’s past when women supposedly played a full part in political, religious and social life. Chapters iv and v trace the story further, discussing the All India Women’s Conference and the campaign for women’s social rights in the reform of Hindu personal law. This is a particularly interesting section, which discusses how the British decided at the end of the eighteenth century to administer Hindu law to Hindus (and Muslim law to Muslims) in domestic concerns. Warren Hastings, in a Judicial Plan in 1772, divided indigenous law into personal law—dealing with such matters as inheritance—governed by Hindu traditional law, and the rest, governed by British regulations. Robinson traces relevant legislation into the twentieth century and describes the Indian women’s movement’s reactions. In this context, she shows how on the one hand voices such as Lady Sircar’s argued that women’s demand for the removal of legal disabilities was based on ideas of justice and equity, and on the other how we have Sri Sankaracarya of the Kamakoti Pitham defending Hindu law against reforms that would favour women. The final chapter discusses the contemporary debate and the issue of whether the position of
women is to be improved and developed from within the Hindu tradition itself, or whether the subordination of women is inherent in the Hindu tradition. Robinson describes different trajectories within the modern movement, such as the Marxist Progressive Organization of Women which sees women’s inequality as being due to economic causes, and the Mahila Samta Sainik Dal which regards religion as the primary cause of women’s oppression. A conclusion examines the situation to the mid-1990s with a discussion of sati, dowry deaths, and female foeticide.

In one sense the book makes somewhat depressing reading in that even as we enter the twenty-first century ‘the Indian women’s movement is still confronted with many obstacles to the empowerment of women in contemporary India’ (p. 175). The debate is further complicated by the ideology of hindutva and the rise of the Hindu radical right in which many women participate. Many Indian women do not share the vision of the Indian women’s movement and rather construct an identity of Hindu women within one community in opposition to women of another community. This is, of course, antithetical to the liberal agenda of the women’s movement and it is yet to be seen how all this will be played out in history.

The book is a welcome contribution to the literature on the women’s movement in India and to discussions of world feminism. It must be seen as following from Jana Matson Everett and Geraldine Forbes in the context of whose work the author locates her own. Indeed, one criticism is that Catherine Robinson’s voice could have come through more strongly in emphasizing the originality of her own project. In my view, the book would have been enhanced by a greater theoretical sophistication: firstly in drawing on the work of the ‘subaltern’ theorists such as Spivak and Guha and locating her work more centrally in a postcolonial discourse. The name Gauri Visvanathan, whose very interesting work on Besant could have been used in this context comes to mind. Secondly the author could have developed a feminist critique drawing on Cixous and Irigaray. Of particular relevance, I would have thought, would be Irigaray’s idea of the erasure of women’s subjectivity. The development of this idea in an Indian context (it is already implicit in the book) would have perhaps given a sharper critical edge. But nevertheless this book does a great service in teaching a great deal to those who do not know this history and in highlighting the names of the extraordinary women who have fought for women’s rights in Indian history, and who are still fighting.

GAVIN FLOOD

RACHEL DWYER:

The poetics of devotion: the Gujarati lyrics of Dayārām.


Gujarati literature is not widely known. Rarely translated into non-Indian languages, it suffers in India as in the West from a negative, yet unjustified, prejudice. Rachel Dwyer’s book, a study of the last pre-modern poet, one of Gujarat’s greatest, is most welcome. Dayārām (1777–1852) is not easy to understand or to evaluate, even less to translate. The author must therefore be congratulated first for situating him within his ambiguous tradition, on the threshold between the medieval period and modern times, for guiding us towards a progressively improving understanding of his work thanks to an
innovative analysis based on Mikhaïl Bakhtin's critical theories, and above all for offering us translations of 106 of his poems.

Chapter ii deals with Daya râma's life and work. Dwyer stresses the two contradictory aspects of Dayâ's biography: the hagiography of a Vaisnava poet saint surrounded by his disciples, and the tumultuous life story of a rebellious poet, a non-conformist who clearly enjoyed being supremely elegant. Dwyer does not argue that Daya râma belonged to the exclusive caste of the Nâgar Brahmins who advocated an accomplished literary and artistic education, including music, and who, as they knew and liked the Persian language, were well acquainted with the culture of the Muslim courts which they traditionally served. But she quite rightly focuses on Daya râma's religious background—the Vallabhan Puṣṭimâr̥ga sect from which he drew, according to her, his poetic inspiration, while at the same time avoiding close contact with the religious authorities of the movement. Erroneous dates concerning (pp. 23–4) Vîthânâ: 1516–86, and Gopinâth: 1512–43, ought to be corrected. The Gujarati contribution to the Puṣṭimâr̥ga needs to be nuanced: the Navâkhya or Vallabhâkhya by Gopâlâs (before 1577), of no literary value as such, is known, recited, translated in Braj and commented upon (p. 25).

Daya râma's œuvre is described clearly and exhaustively. He is the only traditional poet whose works were fairly well transmitted, as he checked the copies of his manuscripts himself (p. 34); it is not surprising that, being a Nâgar brahmin, he used the devanâgari script, a characteristic habit of his caste (n. 45), rather than the rounder Gujarati one. The garâbî form undoubtedly characterizes his short lyrics, and Dwyer aims to define as precisely as possible this exclusive Gujarati genre typical of the medieval Indo-Aryan short lyrics which remain incomplete unless placed into the context of their ‘performance’ (S. K. Das, 'Terms for the medieval Indian short verse forms', Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature, 1982–83). One might regret that Dwyer, although generally well informed, chooses to neglect the living tradition of Daya râma's lyrics (introduction, pp. 9 and 55) generally a useful and rewarding source of information. Concerning the list of model padas quoted from Bhayani and Yajnik (p. 42), it is published in N. Vora, Désionî suci (Gandhinagar, 1990, pp. 369–77). I liked the concise analysis (pp. 48–52) of the language used by Daya râma in his lyrics and especially the list of the Arabo-Persian words (pp. 49–51).

Chapter iii explores Daya râma's position as a classic, with the sectarian opinion of the Vaisnava on one hand and on the other Dayâ's reputation among nineteenth-century critics, under the influence of the colonial culture, at a time marked by the influence of puritanism—this perhaps partially explaining why his fame spread slowly. However, one of Dwyer's arguments, namely the allegedly small number (nine in all, p. 59), of Dayârâma's poems contained in I. S. Desai's anthology Bhratâkavyadohana (Bombay, 1886–1913, 8 vols and not 10 as originally planned) needs to be nuanced: Dayârâma is present not only in vol. 6, but also in vol. 1 (pp. 614–38) and 4 (pp. 778–840); the introduction to vol. 5, which Dwyer could not see, deals with Daya râma on pp. 3 to 52, where Desai explains the relative absence of his works by stating that he had published at the Gujarati Printing Press the Works of Daya râma (3rd ed., 1887) edited by Kavi Narmad.

In order to situate Daya râma clearly in Gujarati literature, Dwyer introduces the most important writers and creators of the classical canon, generously illustrating their work with the help of translated passages. I slightly disagree on the following points: the literary analysis of K. M. Munshi (Gujaratî and its literature, 1935) is outdated and it is not necessary to reprint, for instance,
his assertion that Narasimha Mahetā was (p. 63) an ‘apostle of Aryan culture’. It must be stated more firmly that Mirābāi (Mīrām), pp. 63–6, has been ‘adopted’ in Gujarati but is not a Gujarati author. One ought not to put faith in fanciful biographies of an author like Premānand (p. 68) about whom—as in the case of all medieval authors—no certain evidence is available; Dayārām is an exception. Finally, on p. 70, Ratanbāi, the disciple of the Chishti Sufī Kāyamādīn, cannot have been an Ismāʿīlī Bohra. Stating severely yet lucidly at the end (p. 76) that Dayārām’s œuvre, along with the entire corpus of medieval Gujarati literature, still awaits serious scholarly appraisal, Dwyer admits the limits to her efforts, thus justifying the use of Bakhtinian methods of analysis in her fourth chapter.

Introducing Bakhtin, Dwyer aims to prove ‘that carnival and chronotope are essential to a generic understanding of Dayārām in particular and Kṛṣṇaite poetry in general’. She thus succeeds in increasing our understanding of one type of bhakti, namely that which has taken shape in the Braj country, on the substratum of Braj folk culture, partially adapted and reworked by the sectarian views of the Puṣṭimārga, and she is able to explain the function of the religious literature retransmitted by Dayārām to his contemporaries in the first half of the nineteenth century in the Gujarati language and to account for the ‘brahmanization’ made fashionable by Puṣṭimārgī principles as much as by contemporary literary critics. The examples illustrating her demonstration are all drawn from the themes and imagery shared by the Kṛṣṇaite Braj bhakti. However, Dayā’s specific contribution, the retransmission in Gujarati of a poetic tradition, and, in order to achieve this, the creation of a new poetic language rendering possible access to the divine world of Kṛṣṇa, is not the subject of Dwyer’s work, and remains, as she rightly says (p. 8), the object of further Indological work. Whatever the efficiency of the Bakhtinian analysis, this alone cannot prove that thanks to it Dayārām’s work becomes a source for the history of Gujarati folk culture during the nineteenth century (p. 113); and while it is interesting to explain, in terms of ‘carnivalization’, the phenomenon of Kṛṣṇaite bhakti, one must remember that Gujarati popular religious culture never rejected its tantric components.

In the final chapter, Dwyer presents, with the translation appearing on the opposite pages, the text (in roman characters) of 106 of Dayārām’s poems, mainly padas and ṣaraṭīs, chosen from the 228[229] figuring in the Nāvāl edition, Dayārāma-raṣṭasudham (Bombay, 1953). No reason is given for this choice. A few poems, especially at the end and very famous, depart from the traditional inspiration of the Kṛṣṇaite Srṅgār bhakti, to achieve a Kabirian flavour. The author modestly affirms the translations to be literal. They are indeed very pleasant to read, elegant, and very easy to follow with the original text on the opposite page. It is an excellent achievement, all the more so as we do not have much translation of or even many commentaries on medieval Gujarati poetry. Yet the need for further explanatory notes is clearly felt (in spite of the author’s explanations on p. 16). Dayārām is difficult to translate, in spite of a reliable textual transmission, many a perplexing interpretation ought to be motivated. One would have liked to have been party to the translator’s understandings and to have participated in the elaboration of the philological work. Let us take two examples: I,7 tāma is read as tana ‘body’ whereas it might not be impossible to accommodate the meaning of the original tāma ‘keynote, tune, sound of music’; inversely 142,2 khara is kept unchanged with the somewhat surprising meaning of ‘donkey’, where some editors have read, more logically if less grammatically accurate, khara ‘salt’ (B. J. Sandesara, Dayārām, Baroda, Gūrjara kāvyāśrēṇī, 1960, 79, and...
M. Jhaveri, *Dayārāma*, Bombay, Gūrjara sāhitya sarita, 1960, p. 44). Only three of the seven erratically numbered footnotes (on a total of 217 pages) are thought sufficient to inform about, or explain, an intricate translation.

These few observations are not meant in any way to diminish the quality of a remarkable translating job. The select bibliography achieves an excellent compromise without any major omissions. Exhaustiveness would not have added much. A short and intelligent index concludes the book.

FRANÇOISE MALLISON

ANNA A. SUVOROVA:
Masnavī: a study of Urdu romance, translated from the Russian by M. Osama Faruqi.

The number of scholars anywhere outside South Asia who work on Urdu literature is so small that it must be a matter for special regret that a field thus limited is further divided by language, with most of us in the West needing translations in order to have direct access to the work of our Russian colleagues, otherwise known to us only through too brief English summaries or reviews. This translation into English of a major study first published in Russian in 1992 by their currently most distinguished representative, Anna Suvorova, is particularly to be welcomed both on these general grounds and because it is itself a work of such intrinsic scholarly interest.

Ever since the time of Hali and his reformist contemporaries, the masnavī has had rather a hard time of it in Urdu literary criticism. Failing to survive the transition from the classical to the modern period, unlike the ever supple ghazal, the thematic and stylistic elaborations of the classical Urdu masnavī, with its often fantastic romantic themes, have invited little sympathetic attention from most Urdu critics or their Western counterparts. The great merit of Suvorova’s approach is the way in which she succeeds in arousing a lively interest in what has too often come to be regarded as a genre which properly belongs in a museum.

This is achieved through a mixture of stimulating generalization with often very illuminating critical discussions of representative individual texts. Arguing against the conventional view that the Urdu romantic masnavī is simply a mechanical imitation of the Persian genre, Suvorova begins by drawing a fundamental typological distinction between the ‘dāstān-like’ masnavī and what she calls the ‘ballad-like’ type. In distinction from the familiar first type, with its extended narrative, fairy-tale setting and happy ending, the ‘ballad-like’ masnavī is much shorter, has a local setting ‘creating an atmosphere of pseudo-authenticity’, and ends tragically.

First identifying the ‘ballad-like’ type of Urdu masnavī in the Deccani period in Muqim’s *Chandarbadan-o Mahiyar* of 1638, where it is already intertwined through the different religions of the lover and his beloved with the ‘Turk and Hindu’ theme so characteristic of the later pre-modern Indo-Islamic literary imagination and its marked Sufi orientations, Suvorova goes on to establish a suggestive link with the classic Panjabi and Sindhi romances and the transmission of these into the cultural mainstream through those subsequently little read seventeenth and eighteenth century Persian versions. She then shows both how closely Mīr’s short romantic verse narratives, which
fit only rather awkwardly into the conventional critical categories, in fact conform very closely to this type, and how neatly his Daryā-e 'ishq and Šu'lu'lu-e 'ishq, the two poems she selects for particular discussion, contrast as Sufi allegories in their respective symbolic explorations of the watery world of women and the fiery fate of a hero who goes up in flames.

The ground shifts to the other, ‘dāštān like’ type of masnavī in the two following chapters which deal with the prime examples of this type in Urdu, Mir Hasan’s Sihr ul bayān and the Gulzār-i Nāsim. While helpfully tidying up some previous confusions, including some of the loose definitions of Mir Hasan’s poem offered in Russell and Islam’s still influential account in Three Mughal poets, the critical focus here is upon the cultural significance of these poems. Showing the intimate linkage of the first with the aristocratic values and practices of the culture of Lucknow, and of the second with that culture’s stylistic obsessions, Suvorova also makes a number of stimulating observations on the place of the masnavī in the classical Urdu hierarchical system of literary genres. These culminate in the book’s fifth chapter, where on the one hand the historically controversial status in the canon of its last significant exemplar, Shauq’s Zahr-e ‘ishq, is convincingly shown to derive from the perception of a culturally unacceptable contamination of the ‘ballad-like’ type with a new post-classical realism, while on the other the popularity of its adaptation as a drama points to the still under-explored generic shifts associated with the great Indian cultural divide of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

It has to be said that the English translation, while competent, is rather wooden. It will, however, be apparent from the enthusiastic tone of this review that the distancing effect sometimes thereby produced is by no means a barrier to the appreciation of a voice of very real critical intelligence.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE

MARJATTA PARPOLA:
Kerala Brahmans in transition: a study of a Nampūtiri family.

Parpola sets herself an ambitious task—to measure the degree of change that has taken place within the Brahmin community in the state of Kerala, South India. Continuous fieldwork spanning thirty years has allowed her to monitor the effects of modernization, globalization, cultural shifts and socio-political trends on generations of Nampūtiri Brahmans. By choosing to record material from only a few families she produces a convincing and extensive study.

Parpola grounds her ethnographic approach in a Sanskrit text from the Vedic period known as Śāṅkara-Smṛti. This text incorporates sixty-four anācāras or irregular customs traditionally followed by the Nampūtiri Brahmans. These anācāras could be thought of as rules or social laws that propound the behaviour expected of members of this high-caste group. They are often called Keralācāras or customs of Kerala, revealing their uniqueness to this region of India. Parpola compares, through the generations evolving during her lengthy fieldwork, the extent to which current behaviour (at any time) reflects the practice and conventions outlined in this text. Through such an analysis she is able to draw conclusions regarding the extent to which
Nampūtiri families have changed, not just in terms of their religious practices, but also with respect to the organization of their living space, the level of interaction with other castes, employment, movement outside the domestic space, education, dress, pollution, food, etc.

Parpola founds her methodology in the work of Bourdieu, who states that individuals make choices for themselves (display agency) within the pre-existing social system. As such Parpola regards her informants as agents within their social system. She also identifies conflicts which highlight how change does not suit all. Some family members (male elders) attempt to hold on to the power invested in them in the traditional feudal system both in terms of land ownership and through their control over the priesthood and thus the divine.

Parpola concludes that Nampūtiri Brahmins are in transition. Bourdieu describes a period of crisis (doxa) that may occur within a community as the decisive factor which will force its members to question the status quo of the social order; some may demand and even achieve change. Parpola believes that the period of crisis affecting Nampūtiri Brahmins began with colonialism and persisted through the erosion of Orthodox Brahmin tradition by Western material culture. In particular the influence of television, broadcasting images of more liberated lifestyles, has provoked younger generations to demand greater freedoms, including the power to decide their future professions. The prevalence of nationalism has perpetuated the crisis. Although nationalist leaders propound Brahmin ideology, the drive to see a resurgence of traditional values does not translate into greater power for Nampūtiri families. Instead they see their power further eroded; in spite of their once being well positioned to acquire education and thus enter the professions, Brahmins now struggle to compete for places against individuals from lower castes who have found their opportunities increased by a system of reservations in both education and professions.

I believe that this book represents a valuable contribution to the debate on the impact of global change on the social reality of individual families (bridging the gap between the micro and the macro). However, I was left disappointed that the author did not go further. Her wealth of material failed to go beyond a study of the workings of patriarchy operating within a prescriptive set of Vedic rules. Although she identified the group that resists change (male elders), she does not offer a full explanation as to why they fear change (loss of power). Answering this question in detail would uncover a full range of voices expressing dissent from orthodox practice as well as identifying various strategies used by groups that find themselves marginalized and who then act to carve out a more satisfactory lifestyle for themselves. By limiting her focus to an analysis of the extent to which orthodox rules are still followed she is unable to access the diversity of modes of expression that will exist within a given group. I would question her claim that she has increased the self-esteem of the women she interviewed through the very process of consultation. Does she assume that what she saw was an accurate reflection of the feelings and beliefs of the women with whom she lived? Public interviews pressurize informants into supporting the dominant voice (male elder) whilst suppressing their own views of how they experience life. This may well be a methodological weakness. I would argue that what Parpola conveys in her work are the experiences of the dominant male group within the Nampūtiri family. Even though the book does include separate chapters on women and men, Parpola’s interviewing techniques are very formal and thus fail to allow her informants to express themselves in ways they find
natural. This does not in any way diminish her contribution, but the author might consider adapting her methodology on future work on the experiences of other groups. On finishing her work I was left questioning how this period of transition is personally experienced by the Nampūtiri Brahmins it affects, and its impact on young men, male elders and widows.

In summary this is a useful work which opens up further lines of inquiry which other researchers may well fruitfully undertake.

TAMisin Bradley

VEENA NAREGAL:

*Language politics, elites, and the public sphere: western India under colonialism.*


There is a growing body of research on the public sphere in South Asia which analyses common phenomena—like language standardization, the impact of the colonial education system, the beginnings of a vernacular press and of local associationism—through the prism of regional specificities—as dictated by the political and economic history of each region, by its social forces, cultural traditions, and so on. The result, however, is not a uniform history of nationalism merely declined along public sphere terms—with an emphasis on rational communication, voluntary activism, the press and education, and changes in literary tastes and in political ideology. Rather, what we see is a history of different trajectories, each shedding a peculiar light on certain common processes in the making of colonial modernity. Take the case of Marathi, studied in this book. Unlike other parts of India, where colonial administrators and educationists argued the advantages of working through English or through Indian classical languages (Persian and Sanskrit), and where education was thoroughly bilingual throughout, in the Marathi area the importance of the vernacular was recognized from the very beginning. Only later was official patronage withdrawn from vernacular education and textual production, and the emphasis shifted towards English. Did this open up a greater possibility for vernacular intellectuals from non-elite backgrounds, is the author’s tantalizing question. Did it allow them to take a more active role in the production of public discourse and to diffuse (‘laicise’ is the word the author uses) the new knowledge?

This question becomes even more pertinent considering the second peculiarity of Marathi, that is the presence of a lower-caste, anti-Brahminical set of public institutions and discourses from as early as the mid-nineteenth century, with the remarkable figure of Jotiba Phule and his schools for girls and for low-caste boys. Whereas vernacular intellectuals elsewhere in India in the nineteenth century—all invariably of high caste—started talking of themselves as the vanguard of the public and saw themselves as ‘educating’ and reforming the unreformed public—lower castes, women and all—in Maharashtra they had a much harder time, because here was someone who was claiming access to the same colonial public sphere and to the same benefits of education, the new knowledge and social mobility under the aegis
of liberal discourse. The specific question this book raises is then: why, given these potentially democratic or democratizing factors, did the Marathi vernacular public sphere in the phase of ‘maturity’ (after 1860) take such a decisively conservative turn? Why didn’t a ‘popular anti-colonial alliance’ arise? On the contrary, what is generally called the vernacular Renaissance of the 1870s marks in fact the success of the dominant agenda of the conservative defence of the hierarchical structure of native society (p. 137).

This, however, is only the ‘ethnographic’ part of this book. Much more ambitiously, and with great assurance, it also probes analytically into some of the central themes in the constitution of any public sphere under a colonial regime. For this reason, this book is recommended to all those who seek to understand colonial public spheres anywhere in the world. These themes are: the fate of liberal ideas in regimes of ‘colonial difference’ and ‘in contexts inimical to the principles of liberal communicative reasoning’ (p. 205); the actual, as opposed to the intentional, connection between education and social mobility; and bilingualism and the all-important role of translation as a vehicle of change, at times displaying and at times hiding the asymmetrical power relations between guest-language and host-language. Translation from English into Marathi in the classroom, for example, was ‘burdened with multiple cognitive functions: it was meant as a somewhat hapless substitute for a substantive elucidation of ideas and concepts, even as it was meant to drill students in habits of writing and reading. Translation was used pretty much like a holdall pedagogic tool to reduce the learning of several unfamiliar skills and competencies to a circular pattern of activity that would eventually deliver results through mechanical repetition’ (p. 110).

Perhaps the most fascinating discussion in the book is that on bilingualism, from the staggering beginning of Balshastri Jambhekar’s Bombay Darpan (1832), which was completely bilingual and, by virtue of its absence of comment on this fact or on the ‘original’ language of contributions, or on the underdeveloped state of the vernacular, fearlessly tried to posit equality between the status of English and of Marathi (p. 129). This kind of bilingualism eventually proved unsustainable, and subsequent Marathi newspapers were monolingual. Later journals in the 1870s were bilingual in a different, and more common, way: by carrying some of the news and articles in Marathi and others in English ‘these later papers implicitly admitted the existence of two virtually discrete audiences to whom non-identical messages needed to be directed, and who needed to be addressed simultaneously, but separately, in English and Marathi. The layout of these papers acknowledged an irrevocable ideological divide between the English and vernacular spheres’ (p. 219). Unlike the old vernaculars, the new, standardized vernaculars which became print-languages and the regional vehicles of public discourses, were conceived as an extension of English and remained locked in a relation of subordination to it.

In the case of Marathi, the control over vernacular textual production and education by a Brahminical intelligentsia ensured, Naregal argues, that the democratic possibility of the vernacular as a vehicle of popular communication and the diffusion of knowledge were curtailed, and non-elites were marginalized or excluded from the Marathi public sphere; even if, with Phule, they had been there in the first place. A significant merit of this richly-argued history is the way it raises questions such as that of general access to and control over knowledge, of education and social mobility, and of the fate of liberal discourses which reach out to the present day.

FRANCESCA ORSINI
The title of this publication would lead one to believe that it is a textbook on Indian family law written for the convenience of a student of the subject. It is, however, a collection of essays on selected topics written and published by the author over a period of time through South Asian outlets, in particular the *Kerala Law Times*. Nevertheless, the book covers all major areas and issues in modern Indian family law; marriage, divorce, polygamy, maintenance, property and a uniform civil code. It provides a representative overview of the major issues and developments in Indian family law in the 1980s and 1990s.

The essays included are testimony to the highly commendable tradition of SOAS scholars to contribute to the study of law and society in Asian and African states. This publication not only demonstrates Menski’s fine scholarship but also shows the depth of his knowledge of Indian family law. Writing with a great deal of care and skill, the author presents us with his candid views on the state of the development of Indian laws in general and family law in particular. The essays presented in this book speak of the wealth of knowledge the author has of not only the law but also the socio-political dimension that have influenced the operation of the Indian family law.

It is a quite daunting task to present a comprehensive and comprehensible picture of family law in India, a country so diverse in its ethnic and religious composition. Menski more than meets the task by presenting a nice overview of modern Indian family law without setting out to write a student-oriented book designed to provide a comprehensive treatment of the subject matter. When analysing the law he also explains its background, which makes for interesting reading not just for lawyers but also for students and researchers of other areas of social science. When analysing the provisions of Indian family law the author makes frequent comparisons with Western equivalents; this approach is very helpful to Western readers.

Many Indian concepts relating to family are fundamentally different from those in the West. Hindu traditions going back centuries are a major influence and matrimonial and marital matters are regulated less formally than is the case in the West. For instance, the concept of marriage in Indian Hindu tradition is fundamentally different from the modern concept of marriage in the West. Consequently, when the formal rules of law have to be applied to the problems resulting from such traditional relationships the situation becomes complicated. The author states that cases relating to marriage ‘often come up in Indian law where one party claims that a particular Hindu marriage does not exist or, more precisely, there is or was no legally binding marriage between two particular spouses’ (p. 9). This is because a Hindu marriage is very much a traditional affair performed within a society; there is no involvement of the law or any formal state institutions. Similarly, the very idea of divorce is not recognized in Hindu tradition. Modern Indian society is, however, trying to come to terms with the alien concept of divorce. Consequently, the law is now trying to recognize and regulate divorce in a society which is not fully geared to accepting it. The author is successful in examining such intricacies in a Hindu society and in so doing highlights Muslim traditions and practices which differ from their Hindu equivalents.

Constitutionally, India is a secular state. The vision of the state from the time of Indian independence in 1947 seems to have been to achieve some sort
of uniformity in matters of family law through the adoption of a uniform civil code for the whole country. However, the state seems to be far from achieving this objective. Consequently, the Indian judiciary has to grapple with both the Hindu and Muslim religious traditions in deciding cases relating to family matters. The cases analysed in this book demonstrate the difficulty the courts face in this regard: it is difficult enough a job to present a comprehensive overview of family law issues governing a traditional Hindu society, but it is doubly challenging to cover the influence of both the Hindu and Muslim traditions on family law matters of a single jurisdiction. Menski takes up this challenge and presents us with a book which analyses law and practice from both Muslim and Hindu perspectives. He devotes a long chapter to an analysis of the central role of the judiciary in modernizing Indian family law and in imposing uniformity in its own Indian way. The author rightly concludes that ‘The realisation that life drives law, not the other way round, contradicts not only the dominant Western model approach to legal positivism and legal centralism, it is also typically Indian’ (p. 403).

All in all, what we see in the work under review is an attempt to examine modern Indian family law from both Hindu and Muslim perspectives, and the efforts of the state machinery and the Indian judiciary and parliament in particular to impose some order, uniformity and consistency in regulating the private family affairs of Indian nationals. The book succeeds in meeting these objectives and is a welcome addition to the limited body of literature available in the West on this subject.

SURYA P. SUBEDI

ALISON SHAW:
Kinship and continuity: Pakistani families in Britain.

Alison Shaw’s earlier field study of Oxford Muslims (A Pakistani community in Britain, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), based on extensive fieldwork in Britain and Pakistan, is now considered one of the major recent studies on the Pakistani presence in the UK, together with the work of Philip Lewis on Islamic Britain (London: I. B. Tauris, 1994) and Pnina Werbner’s book on The migration process (Oxford: Berg, 1990). Now based at Brunel University, Shaw has continued work on her earlier field and the present book expands and updates the earlier study rather than being just a second edition (p. xv). The result is a most valuable and very readable account of change and continuity within the Oxford Pakistani Muslim communities since the 1980s. Shaw manages to capture developments and trends which can also be observed elsewhere and thus documents and corroborates, meticulously and often with direct quotes, what we are beginning to understand in more detail about the reconstruction of Muslim communities in Britain ‘on their own terms’, to use Roger Ballard’s key phrase from Desh pardesh (London: Hurst, 1994).

Shaw’s study makes important contributions to a number of ongoing debates. Rather than the academically cemented, publicly constructed idiom of South Asians in Britain, she emphasizes situation-specific scenarios and personal strategies by individuals within the context of the family or wider group to work out agreeable solutions to conflicts. This approach not only records the carefully hidden personal experiences of her local informants in Oxford and Pakistan as a matter of anthropological enquiry, it also highlights
how Oxford Pakistani Muslims, while sharing many characteristics with other British Muslims, have been reconstructing their very own worlds within the contexts of their personal histories and specific local settings. Bradford is some way away, but what goes on elsewhere does not bypass the Oxford Pakistanis, who are shown to be skilful users of multiple communication links within Britain, and across the oceans to Pakistan.

Shaw’s main arguments come together in a central thesis of ‘accommodation without assimilation’ and the observation that kinship remains a key concept in practice and is likely to remain the central idiom of social interaction (p. 158). The importance of the family over individuals is highlighted, as well as the positioning of Oxford families as extensions of Pakistani *biraderis* or clans, which makes British Pakistanis (and not only them) ‘double-rooted’. Linked to these anthropological, more internal issues is the political and external, public dimension of the place of Pakistanis in modern Britain’s civil society. Here Shaw takes a clear stance and cautions against taking all Pakistanis as a homogeneous group, warning in particular against assuming some form of unidirectional social change. Her richly documented material provides innumerable examples of how what appears to be a cross-cultural challenge involves ‘not a wholesale rejection of a “culture” or “religion” in favour of “Western” values, but is instead an attempt at reform from within’ (p. 189). The conclusion to this debate reiterates that stresses inherent in the Pakistani migrants’ culture itself, rather than outside influences, play a central role in settling contested issues in a new socio-cultural (and legal) environment. Only someone with deep cultural insight can reach and project such conclusions as clearly as Shaw does throughout this study.

From a legal perspective, I found this work immensely helpful, even though Shaw does not write specifically for lawyers. But the issues she identifies, especially the conflict situations, all have immensely direct legal relevance. This is the kind of study that English judges should read in order to be sensitized and more effectively prepared for dealing with ‘ethnic minority’ legal issues.

Apart from the introduction and conclusion, the book contains nine major chapters. These focus in turn on the migration and settlement processes, household and family, caste, the *biraderi* and cross-cousin marriages, as well as issues of honour and shame, health, domestic relations, and the more outwardly political public dimensions of Oxford Pakistani life. Many points of detail would deserve specific mention but alas, a review does not permit that. At any rate, there is simply no substitute for reading this excellent book.

For example, Shaw repeatedly refers to the key role of dowry arrangements among Pakistanis. This constant allusion to a particular set of practices and their contested and changing nature definitely whets the appetite for more information and deeper analysis. Perhaps we will get there one day; it is evident that a lot more painstaking research work needs to be done before full-fledged studies on such specialized but immensely relevant issues can be written. The same would apply to work on ‘forced marriages’, a spicy topic to which the study under review repeatedly alludes. Shaw’s work thus helpfully opens some windows, allowing us a glimpse of the enormously detailed research work that is yet to be done on so many issues concerning Pakistanis and other South Asians (and indeed all other ethnic minorities) in the UK.

An area of central interest to many readers will be the very complex position of women among Pakistanis, generally as well as in Oxford. Shaw’s account is subtly perceptive not only about processes of chain migration,
which first of all involved males, but also about the impact of bringing wives to the UK from Pakistan (p. 37), clearly a process which continues. Her study provides a multi-layered analysis of women’s work and roles and its changing social evaluation, with innumerable points of relevant detail. Finally, Shaw emphasizes in the concluding analysis that Muslim identity (which is so manifestly pluralistic in itself), rather than ethnicity, remains a central issue for all concerned.

Regrettably, a considerable number of printing and setting errors have survived the production process, but this cannot distract from the fact that this is a significant contribution to the literature on South Asians as ‘transnational’ or perhaps rather ‘translocal’ communities. Many people, from a number of disciplines, will read Shaw’s book not only with intellectual curiosity but with practical concerns in mind. More studies of this kind are needed to facilitate the ongoing process of Britain becoming more aware of—and hopefully more at ease with—growing pluralization and more explicit recognition of the hybrid nature of all human existence.

Werner Menski

SUMIT GUHA:

Health and population in South Asia: from earliest times to the present.


In this monograph Sumit Guha discusses a range of significant issues in relation to health and population in South Asia. He shows how fluctuations in population growth have been one of the more elusive areas of interest for South Asian historians and demographers. In his overview of various contemporary theories and historical perspectives used in demographic analysis Guha covers some well-known debates and issues regarding population growth. His own research adds some innovative insights into the problematic field of population analysis.

Demographers and historians alike have debated explanations of population movements in India. Guha provides the reader with detailed studies dealing with specific issues in relation to health and population in South Asia from the first century to the present day. The six essays in the book under review enable Guha legitimately to cover such a wide time span. He begins with a broad introduction to some complex issues relating to health and population drawing on a variety of academic research in this area and related fields of enquiry. He presents an overview of the fluctuations in specific world populations during different historical periods. The first three chapters explore the myriad theories concerning the fluctuations in population in South Asia, offering a concise overview of the various debates that have arisen in recent years regarding health issues in South Asia. The author addresses the sudden and inadequately explained decline in the mortality rate in early twentieth-century India. He also re-evaluates some traditional notions with regard to household size and structure in western India from 1700 to 1950.

In chapter iv Guha examines the popular argument that, during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, advances in modern medicine were responsible for the improvement in mortality and morbidity rates in India; others have emphasized improved nutrition and sanitation measures taken to prevent disease. Guha uses detailed statistical evidence of a specific
historical population, the British Army in India, to assess how knowledge regarding health issues was implemented. He points out that although this sample does not reflect the rest of the population, it can provide information about the prevalent health issues of the time. In chapter v Guha presents a translation of propaganda produced to encourage people to take the smallpox vaccination. The tract was written in Marathi by the English surgeon Thomas Coats in 1812. Guha demonstrates how Coats used a local style and information to legitimate vaccination against smallpox in order to encourage a population known to have resisted both variolation and vaccination. The final chapter seeks to examine and assess the effect of recent sanitary campaigns on the environment and the overall health of the population.

With the use of government and military statistics, contemporary research and a rare translated document, Guha examines traditional issues in population studies such as fertility, mortality and morbidity. He also explores some contemporary health issues, such as the effects of the environment, climate and female infanticide, on population fluctuations, although famine mortality, contraception and maternal mortality are not dealt with in great detail. The book is a useful introductory text for anyone embarking on research in population studies in South Asia or in comparative world population studies, and would also be of interest to historians, demographers and health administrators interested in population fluctuations with specific reference to health issues in South Asia. Rather than the excessive amounts of quantitative data and inaccessible language usually associated with population studies, Guha maintains a balance between qualitative and interpretive details. His accessible use of language allows him to highlight some of the more important contemporary debates regarding issues of demography.

SHIRLEY GONSAVIES

EAST ASIA

JOHN S. ROHSENOW:
*ABC dictionary of Chinese proverbs.*

Since it plainly takes nothing less than the wisdom of Solomon to compile a collection of proverbs of truly lasting value, it is probably best not to judge any new work in the field too harshly, and in truth there is a very great deal to commend in John Rohsenow’s volume. Some time has now passed since the first publication of now classic works of this type by earlier sinologists, like those of Arthur Smith or C. H. Plopper, during which (as Rohsenow’s fascinating and erudite introduction points out) the rise from the mid-twentieth century onward of a new literature celebrating peasant life has stimulated a great deal of lexicographic activity in China itself. Even Lu Xun, one notes, attracted in 1978 a slim volume entirely devoted to the regionalisms in his works, and other authors introduced many more snippets of local wisdom to the Chinese reading public. The reduction of what we now know concerning Chinese proverbs to the convenient format of the ABC dictionary series, and the addition of a full bibliography of these older and more recent
materials, together with a comprehensive index, all go to make this reasonably priced volume a must for anyone who uses the Chinese language at all, for whatever purpose.

Even so, there are a number of points for criticism too. Unlike, for example, the original *ABC Chinese-English dictionary*, there would appear to be no statement that this reviewer could find concerning the principles of selection governing inclusion in the work. Presumably (though under the circumstances, this is no more than a guess) every proverb given in the body of the work is in some sense in current use, and this must at least be true of those which are equipped with an asterisk to mark them out as ‘the most commonly occurring proverbs’ (p. xxv), but there is no obvious clue as to how this fact was determined. In many cases a *locus classicus* is cited, but in many others there is simply an indication that the proverb occurs in a named early vernacular source, such as the great examples of Ming-Qing fiction. Yet it would seem that here these indications are not necessarily supposed to provide the earliest historical examples known, for in the couple of cases of proverbs with which I happen to be familiar from much earlier times, Ming-Qing sources are the only ones given. No characters are provided for any of the sources either in the body of the work or the index, nor are any details of these materials listed in the general bibliography or elsewhere, so although the majority are well enough known to pose no problems in pinyin transcription, others appear distinctly mysterious, at any rate to an outsider to this field.

There are also one or two lesser errors which might be readily corrected in a subsequent printing. Thus while it may perhaps be pardonable to cite proverbs in the introduction which are not included in the body of the work (viz. p. xvi, ‘Cats who like to mew can’t catch mice’), to refer to one and the same pioneer collector there as Yang Sheng’an (p. xv) and as Yang Shen in the bibliography (p. 209) is mildly misleading. Proverb C183 on p. 22 also looks to me as if it contains a homophonous misprint in the Chinese. But, as proverb G14 has it, ‘There is no sugar cane that is sweet at both ends’, so if the compiler’s success has not been entirely unalloyed, we are nevertheless very much in his debt for having produced a work of reference that is also, all in all, a most affordable repository of highly browsable wisdom.

T. H. BARRETT


Although the integration of the study of Chinese literature into the general study of the humanities in higher education seems to have made better
progress in the USA than in Europe, it is interesting to note that educators there have on more than one occasion lately been obliged to turn to European products in order to produce surveys of the field suitable for a broad audience. Evidently the European tradition of writing academic works for general public consumption, a tradition which has already made the writings of historians such as Jacques Gernet familiar to the reader of English, is still robust enough to produce material suitable for American undergraduates. One recent example would be the Guide to Chinese literature of Wilt Idema and Lloyd Haft, originally in Dutch, which was published in 1997 by the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in an English translation by the original authors—though the reader should be warned that the expansive polyglot bibliography of the hardback version is reduced to a merely anglophone shadow of itself in the concurrent paperback.

Evidently, producing an entirely anglophone bibliography for the latest translation venture, an English version of André Lévy’s more summary survey of traditional Chinese literature by (broadly conceived) genre, has equally proved relatively easy for William Nienhauser, too, as his thoroughly Americanized version of the French original attests. Doubtless, for example, Yuan Mei’s prowess as a cookery writer involved no reference to Julia Child (p. 52) in the original French, while the convenience of the Indiana companion to traditional Chinese literature and its supplement as sources for bibliographical tips leads on several occasions simply to the citation of their survey articles for further information. As it stands, four chapters waste no time in introducing the Chinese Classics and other pre-imperial works, later historical and literary prose, poetry, and the literature of entertainment (drama, popular fiction, and the like) succinctly enough to allow the ‘Suggested further reading’ to expand the beginner’s horizons yet further, for example by adding to the section on the twin origins of Chinese poetry (the Songs of Chu and Han yuefu) Dore Levy’s study of somewhat later Chinese narrative poetry.

True, despite the attention lavished on making this volume as user-friendly as possible, one or two blemishes remain, or have been newly introduced. I very much doubt, for example, that even if the Hanshan corpus was—for all its apparent individuality—produced by a group of Zen monks, they should have done so in the sixth century (p. 75), for unless we have got the historiography of the school entirely wrong it seems unlikely that at that time the Zen tradition—even if already founded by Bodhidharma—had enough adherents on Cold Moutain or anywhere else to run up a corpus of verse acting as a team. As for the length of dash required in hyphenation, the copy editor seems to set out in two minds on page one and maintained a studied inconsistency until almost the very end.

Doubtless, as in the case of the first of the larger Indiana volumes, these minor corrections may in due course be added to a master list of errata compiled by some European colleague in the hope that they may be of use in the preparation of a second (and surely a paperback) edition. For most certainly a work such as this should prove robust enough to run to more than one incarnation, so that in due course an entire generation of graduates in Chinese literature may one day rise up to thank both Lévy and Nienhauser for their earliest orientations in what will have proved to be a lifetime of learning. American studies of China established themselves in the mid-twentieth century in a way that involved heaping a certain amount of opprobrium on Old World sinology; it is good to see the new century setting off in a more co-operative and harmonious direction.

Something of the maturity of North American studies of Chinese literature
may meanwhile be gauged from a very different contribution to the education of English-language students in the subject. *Ways with words* is evidently designed for that more advanced stage in the curriculum when the simple verities of introductory courses have to be undermined in order to produce researchers alive to the infinite possibilities that the study of Chinese civilization opens up. As such, it takes the laudably bold approach of selecting seven texts from more than a thousand years ago and subjecting them to translation and to competing interpretations at the hands of a dozen scholars from different backgrounds. The last dozen or so pages then contain the original texts in Chinese for the reader to confront in the light of these conflicting stimuli.

This dramatic way of emphasizing that China before the Song was itself by no means a univocal place cannot be commended too highly, even if the claim of the introduction (p. 2) that such an approach has the sanction of early sinological tradition does seem to be going a little far. That the Jesuits never spoke in terms of a ‘grand opposition between East and West’ is rather belied by the titles of some of their Chinese compositions, even if perhaps inwardly they acknowledged the complexity of cultural comparisons. In fact the editors seem to have boldly gone beyond all existing sinological conventions by devoting their fourth chapter to a piece of prose that was never considered as literature on the same footing as its companion pieces by any Chinese reader in early times, namely the *Heart Sutra*.

Acknowledging the existence of Buddhist scriptures translated from or composed in imitation of Indian models as an irreducible component on the Chinese past after Han times forms such a break with the tradition of Chinese literary studies in the West that one hesitates to criticize this chapter in any way. Nevertheless, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the *Heart Sutra* was not just ‘literature’, even in the noblest conception of what that might mean in Chinese terms, but also very much more. For as the illustration of the *Heart Sutra* written out in the shape of a pagoda on p. 115 testifies, the text constituted a shrine in itself, embodying as it did, like all sutras, the living presence of the very Buddha.

Nor will it do to translate the Buddhist term *fa*, meaning ‘dharma’ as ‘laws’, as on p. 117, as if to suggest that the average Chinese reader was unfamiliar with the basic technical terminology of Buddhism. Are we to suppose that Yuan Hongdao’s friend, the Old Drunkard, went around muttering (to modify the Jonathan Chaves translation) ‘All laws return to the One’? Or that when the early Manchu poet Nalan Singde composed a letter discussing the same phrase with an unnamed monk he did not know what it meant? The division between sinology and Buddhology is a feature of university organization in the English-speaking world; it has nothing to do with the way Chinese texts were read. Real life in China was never chopped up into different course units in different departments—something we have come to expect our students not to notice, but which surely all teachers should be aware of. One can live with books on ‘Chinese literature’ as (to introduce another Buddhist concept) an expedient means, designed to show that China is fit to be studied in the context of the ‘disciplines’ erected by our entirely Eurocentric educational traditions rather than shunted off into some academic ghetto as mere ‘sinology’. In this necessary enterprise both books under review will no doubt have important parts to play. But why succumb so readily to the distortions of knowledge imposed upon us by the institutions in which we are obliged to work?

T. H. BARRETT
ZONG-QI CAI (ed.):  
_A Chinese literary mind: culture, creativity, and rhetoric in Wenxin Diaolong._


In contrast to modern East Asian scholarship on Liu Xie’s (c. 465–c. 521) _Wenxin diaolong_, (translated by Vincent Shih in 1959 as _The literary mind and the carving of dragons_), which is estimated to have reached 140 books and 2,419 articles by 1992 (p. 2), the study of this seminal work on Chinese literary theory in English has been limited to Shih’s translation, two Ph.D. dissertations, and Stephen Owen’s translation of its major chapters with commentaries in his _Readings in Chinese literary thought_. This collection of ten papers from a conference held in 1997 is a welcome addition, being the first book-length study in English. The work under review is divided into four parts. Part 1 focuses on the relationship between _Wenxin diaolong_ and broader literary and critical traditions. Kang-i Sun Chang discusses Liu Xie’s work in the context of canon formation and explains his strategy of forming a link between the literary tradition and the Confucian classics. Zong-qi Cai argues for Liu Xie’s synthesis of religious, humanistic and didactic concepts of literature into his own comprehensive vision of literature. All these concepts regard literature as a harmonizing process, though Cai gives important qualifications.

Part 2 discusses some of the intellectual foundations of the work. Victor H. Mair tackles debates on the role played by Buddhism in the composition of the work, whether _shen_ (spirit) and _xin_ (mind) in the work is Buddhist or not. He lays bare these polemics, and argues that the methodology and epistemology of the work is Indian, although native Confucianism played an equally important role in its composition. Richard John Lynn focuses on the relationship between the writings of Wang Bi (226–249), the neo-Daoist philosopher and Liu Xie’s work, arguing that Liu adopted three key terms from Wang, but with a crucial difference. Wang believed that writing could not communicate the Dao, while Liu argued to the contrary.

Part 3 examines the creative process as understood by Liu Xie. Ronald Egan gives a full translation and close reading of the _Shensi_ chapter of the work, which deals with literary imagination. Following the lead of Angus Graham, he uses the term ‘daimon’ for _shen_, and crucially points out that for Liu, unlike in the West, there is no opposition between imagination and reason or intellect in daimonic thinking. Liu describes the freedom of daimonic thinking, but also highlights the theme of control in terms of prior training of the impulses, mastery of language, reason and unity of purpose for literary creation. Shuen-fu Lin compares Western and Chinese concepts of imagination, and concludes with the remark that while Coleridge and Wordsworth regard the poet’s ‘shaping spirit of imagination’ as genius which, once lost, cannot be regained, Liu emphasizes the importance of continuous cultivation, and the possibility that a writer’s power of imagination is not something with which he alone is endowed, but something he shares with fellow human beings (p. 160).

Part 4 focuses on the art of rhetoric discussed in the work. Andrew Plaks writes on rhetorical parallelism, pointing out that in the classical Chinese literary system, this principle is developed to a degree of subtlety and complexity unequalled in the other classical literatures, and that _Wenxin diaolong_ is a primary _locus classicus_ for this notion among the various texts.
of early Chinese literary theory (p. 164). He further teases out Liu Xie’s treatment of the aesthetics of the four-part scheme of ‘lexical’, ‘semantic’, ‘direct’ and ‘antithetical’ parallelism, and the complementary use of parallel and non-parallel styles. Stephen Owen approaches the same topic from a different angle, and deals with the problems of reading parallel prose. He points out that although parallel prose is well suited for descriptive purposes, it is less effective in making ‘arguments’. For this formal expository procedure of developing a topic through division and amplification, he coins the term ‘discourse machine’, and gives a number of examples where Liu Xie the critic goes along trying to control the problematic products of this machine. Wai-ye Li writes on the tension between wen (pattern, literature, etc.) as immanent order and rhetorical excess, as illustrated in the title ‘Literary mind’ and ‘Carving dragons’, and explains Liu’s contradictory versions of literary history through this ambivalent view. The final chapter, by Zhang Shaokang, surveys studies of the work in East Asian languages, and may be fruitfully read along with Zhou Zhenfu’s Wenxin diaolong cidian (A dictionary for Wenxin diaolong, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), which includes entries on important studies in Chinese and Japanese and on areas in the text that are hotly debated.

The above does not do justice to the author’s numerous original contributions. In general, terminology in Wenxin diaolong is not easy to pin down, and Liu Xie wrote at a time when more than one strand of thought was current. The first task has been to determine which system(s) Liu Xie subscribed to when he wrote his work, and hopefully one day this problem will be solved through further evidential scholarship. Arguing with internal evidence is also crucial, as can be seen in the methodology of many of the contributors. As an extension, chapters in this study can also be fruitfully compared. For example, Zhong-qi Cai’s discussion of Liu Xie modelling his system on the symbolic numerology of fifty in the Book of Changes (p. 56) can be read against Mair’s proposal of an Indian system of poetics. The Buddhist concept of shen (spirit) as proposed by Rao Zongyi in Mair’s chapter (p. 70) can be read against the chapters by Egan and Lin.

This book provides close readings of some of the important chapters in Liu Xie’s work. Many other aspects remain to be explored, including those chapters on specific genres. Again, Zong-qi Cai gives a clear summary of the ten chapters in his introduction, and ends with Owen’s challenging question of why Wenxin diaolong was relatively neglected in Chinese writing before the Qing period. This work provides the stimulus for readers to launch a new enquiry.

TZZI-CHENG WANG

MICHEL HOCKX (ed.):
The literary field of twentieth-century China.

During the 1990s a new trend in international Chinese studies developed: there is a kind of collective thinking which forces scholars wishing to be successful in their field to make use of certain patterns of thought and a certain terminology. Studies of modern China can no longer do without words like ‘gender’, ‘space’, ‘post-colonialism’ and ‘post-modernism’. Contemporary French philosophers in particular, whose works are read in
English translation or adapted from textbooks, are quoted again and again as if China and (post)structuralism and deconstructivism were inseparable. In the 1970s and 1980s it was Maoist discourse which made Chinese studies indigestible, now it is French discourse that can make the reading of Chinese studies written in English an academic torture.

The title of the work under review is taken from the French philosopher Pierre Bourdieu, who published his *Les règles de l’art. Génèse et structure du champ littéraire* in 1992. As if it is necessary to illustrate the rights and wrongs of Pierre Bourdieu’s *règles*! The participants at a workshop held in Leiden, the Netherlands, in January 1996 seem to feel bound not to depart from their masters’ voices. I am afraid I have to admit that I felt increasingly bored when I read through Michel Hockx’s exhaustive introduction to the thought of Pierre Bourdieu and the subsequent collection of articles dealing with Bourdieu and China, too.

Another important rule of international Chinese studies says: if you do not want to perish, quote only yourself. The works quoted most frequently in this book are those of the editor himself. The excellent works of Rudolf Wagner are not mentioned at all, and Márían Gálik is mentioned only once. Not one of the numerous studies published in Germany during the last twenty-five years seems to be known to the authors. For Oliver Kremer, a German, it would have been easy to enrich his article about Chinese writers in exile by taking into account the large number of works which have been published in Germany.

Where is the ‘older’ generation of sinologists? Scholars like Rudolf Wagner, Milena Dolezelova and Márían Gálik have preferred to interpret contemporary Chinese literature either from a literary or from a political point of view; the ‘younger’ generation of sinologists such as Raoul D. Findeisen, Michel Hockx and Claire Huot prefers to talk about the conditions under which it is possible to write about Chinese literature and how it can be organized as an academic discipline. Therefore, the approach of the book under review is quite different from that preferred in the 1980s. The older generation liked ideas, the younger generation likes facts. Nowadays, the reader is fed rich facts which have been overlooked by the more idealistic scholars of the past. However, there remains the problem of China changing so fast that facts become outdated very quickly. This applies in particular to the article by Claire Huot, who writes about censorship as a form of state coercion. Perry Link and others, however, have shown that in the case of the People’s Republic of China one should speak rather of self-censorship than of government censorship.

The bewildering aspect of *The literary field of twentieth-century China* is the fact that nearly thirty years of contemporary Chinese literature (1949–79) does not seem to belong to this very ‘field’: this period is not dealt with at all. Instead, many minor works are discussed at length. I do not deny that I learned a great deal when I read Findeisen’s article on writing about couples or articles on the meaning of ‘she’ (Hockx), the distribution of popular literature (Kaikkonen, Chen Pingyuan) and about translations of foreign literature in magazines at the beginning of the last century (Gimpel). Yet, I constantly had to ask myself, what is the value of literature? The approaches in the book under review lack affection and engagement.

This kind of research can be done on any topic, on papermaking or printing processes in China, for instance, but it does no justice to the aesthetic value of literature. From this admittedly traditional point of view, only Wanchi Wong managed to write an inspiring article. The reason might be quite
simple: the author does not quote Bourdieu and shows very convincingly that translation in China has always been carried out according to political and social needs so that any foreign original had to pass through the same kind of alteration which a Chinese original in a Western language also had to go through.

WOLFGANG KUBIN

SUSANNA HOE:  
*Women at the siege of Peking.*  

Susanna Hoe has now accumulated such a weight of experience in writing of the lives of women, especially Western women, in East Asia during the high noon of imperialism that she evidently now has the self-confidence to take risks which lesser writers would tremble even to contemplate. Here, for example, even though this book was evidently released in the teeth of considerable competition to take advantage of the centenary of the Boxer troubles, it opens with no historical sketch of the nineteenth-century interaction of China and the West, no analysis of the rise of the Boxers—nothing from the normative, male world of historiography at all. Instead a brief prologue and introductory chapter acquaint us in the first instance with the *de facto* ruler of China, the Empress Dowager, as observed by those women of the diplomatic community of Peking who were able to secure audiences with her, a privilege which was itself first granted only in 1898. Throughout what follows it is the writings of women which predominate amongst the sources, even if the records of some men—especially men like G. E. Morrison, who talked both to and about women—are also drawn upon.

As a result we are plunged right from the start into the microscopic examination of events within a small world increasingly hemmed in by larger events until quite soon we are dealing with the day-to-day details of the siege itself. The effect is in a way appropriately claustrophobic. Indeed, at first glance the microscopic approach would seem sometimes to verge on self-parody, as the title of the section ‘Who screamed?’ (pp. 188–92) might suggest. But in fact the patient cross-checking of the published and often unpublished and unfamiliar materials on these questions throws light, as the author unobtrusively points out, on a number of broader issues, such as which nationalities were expected to behave in a less than plucky fashion, and other similar stereotypes.

When the book is read consecutively, indeed, one soon learns to trust the author to select and arrange her material judiciously enough to keep wider horizons always in view, even if she does ‘leave it to the reader to make judgements and draw conclusions’ (p. xv). In practice, though, leaving it to the reader also extends to not making all the connections that a more heavy-handed writer would drive home. This allows us the pleasure, for example, of noting the gloomy reference to Cawnpore by one woman at the start of events (p. 105), balanced by the joyous reference to Lucknow (p. 269) as the relief expedition came at last within earshot—a broader historical viewpoint, of course, was not denied even to the participants themselves.
So, while this is not a book one would read in isolation to gain an understanding of what happened in 1900, there is not much to complain about here, and quite a bit to admire and to learn from. Doubtless other reviewers have complained or will complain about p. 35, where Robert Bredon is described accidentally as ‘brother of Robert Hart’s sister’ (meaning ‘wife’, namely the absent Hester Bredon), but the prominence of this error is largely due to the accuracy of the rest. In lesser hands this work could have been a disaster, full of clunking analysis and potted history. One cannot but be charmed by the good sense of an author who by contrast respects her readers’ intelligence whilst concentrating her considerable energies on the research necessary to make such a book a success. And I do hope that other topics within the territory that she has made so much her own have already suggested themselves to her, for it is a success that deserves to be repeated.

T. H. BARRETT

BARBARA J. BROOKS:

Did the Japanese Foreign Ministry have China hands, and if so, what role did they play in imperial Japan’s foreign policy towards the continent? Barbara J. Brooks sets out to answer this question and, in doing so, provides a valuable addition to recent studies of China and Japan, particularly Louise Young’s Japan’s total empire: Manchuria and the culture of wartime imperialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). Whereas Young focused on the lived experience of creating and maintaining a socio-political experiment in Manchuria, Brooks travels back and forth between the metropole and its periphery, examining the men who were ostensibly responsible for formulating and guiding Tokyo’s China policy. In short, Young argues that, yes, the pre-war Gaimushō had an extensive cadre of China experts, but that, due partly to bureaucratic in-fighting in the ministry, these China hands were increasingly frozen out of the decision-making process.

Brooks provides a loose chronological narrative organized into two main sections: the first recounting what she calls the institutional, cultural, and political setting for the Gaimushō and its China diplomats, and the second showing the China bureau’s loss of authority over both Sino-Japanese relations and the formation of Tokyo’s policy. Throughout, Brooks is careful to note that she is not concerned primarily with top policy makers; rather, her focus is on the middle-level bureaucrats and diplomats, most of whom were opponents of continental expansion. From the first, then, Brooks conceptualizes a scheme in which the relatively moderate China diplomats lost out to factions linked to the aggressive imperial army and its governmental allies.

Of particular note is the first section, whose three chapters break new ground on a number of issues. Since we have only Ian Nish’s 1977 study of modern Japanese foreign policy, Brooks’s first chapter is especially interesting,
recounting as it does the development of the Foreign Office and the emerging role of orthodox ‘Kasumigaseki diplomacy’, which is identified with Shidehara Kijūrō. This reviewer wishes the discussion had been more thorough, but it is valuable nonetheless. Similarly, chapter ii provides an in-depth exploration of the making of the China diplomats, those mid-level bureaucrats, sometimes in the field, whose influence on metropolitan policy waxed and waned according to their own levels of access. No comparable study in English exists to my knowledge. The third chapter minutely details the sphere of responsibility and various roles of the China consuls. Brooks argues that in the interests of reducing the slide towards the colonization of China the consuls attempted to play a buffer role between Chinese authorities and Japanese nationals. Here she ventures to delineate the relationship between the consuls, the Chinese, and the resident Taiwanese and Koreans working under Japanese auspices in China, arguing that the Japanese used their consular jurisdiction to help knit together their emerging sphere of interests between the mainland and these increasingly Japanese-controlled areas.

Brooks’s final two chapters detail the loss of Gaimushō authority over China affairs in the wake of the 1931 Manchurian incident, in which a group of Japanese army soldiers engineered an ‘attack’ on the Manchurian railway and used it as a pretext to begin expanding army control over China. This recounting is notable primarily for retelling the well-known story of the loss of civilian control over Manchuria from the point of view of the diplomats on the scene. Theirs were hands increasingly tied by both the encroachments on their administrative authority in the region and the Gaimushō’s growing impotence in Tokyo, due in part to the rise of nationalistic ‘reform’ bureaucrats. The China diplomats could only watch as the international order they had helped create in China (beneficial to Japan, of course) disintegrated.

Brooks’s argument rests on defining the interplay among various Gaimushō and non-Gaimushō groups in this period. She attempts to carve out an independent space for the China hands, who were intellectually pro-Kasumigaseki, that is, pro-Anglo-American, yet were disappointed by the failure of Shidehara and others to prevent military expansion in China. The China experts, along with their Kasumigaseki superiors, steadfastly maintained that the Gaimushō was not a colonial agency; it was this inability to respond to changing realities in China, as well as the failure to prevent those changes, that resulted in their loss of authority over China affairs.

The capstone to this process was the setting up in 1938 of the Asia Development Board, which severely undercut the policy input from Gaimushō’s Bureau of Asiatic Affairs. Yet precisely because Brooks argues that the mid-level China experts never reached prominence themselves, or established an undisputed position as key aides to top policy makers, it is unclear what other outcome could have resulted. Unlike Peter Duus in his study of the almost haphazard development of Japanese control over Korea, Brooks clearly believes that Manchuria was not acquired in a fit of absence of mind; moreover, she does not believe that Japanese imperialism in China was an aberration from a more stable tradition of international diplomacy. Brooks concludes that there was no single cause for either the loss of Gaimushō authority over China or the slide into war. The failure was system-wide and therefore defies simple exegesis. Fundamentally, it was the rational bureaucratic infighting between men of different ideological stripes, harnessed to an increasingly unstable domestic situation in Japan, which provided much of the tragedy of the modern Sino-Japanese experience.

Michael Auslin
EDWARD J. M. RHOADS:

*Manchus and Han: ethnic relations and political power in late Qing and early Republican China, 1821–1928.*

The question of the relationship between Manchus and Chinese (Han), and the related issue of the Manchus’ assimilation to Chinese culture, has been at the heart of a number of recent studies, to which Edward Rhoads’s book represents a thoughtful, thoroughly researched, and overall very welcome addition. It is fair to say that everyone engaged in the study of the Qing Dynasty is today aware that the relationship between conquering Manchus and conquered Han can no longer be liquidated as an instance of sinicization. Even the voices that have risen in defence of sinicization have had to qualify their viewpoint in the light of much research, beginning with Pamela Crossley’s *Orphan warriors* (Princeton, 1990), showing the complexity and the multifarious nature of this question. By the end of the Qing Dynasty, neither had the Manchus abandoned the privileges and marks of distinction that set them off from the mass of the Chinese population, nor were the Chinese (Han) suggesting that such a process had taken place. Rather, foremost on the mind of fin de siècle anti-Manchu reformists and revolutionaries were worries of an opposite nature: Manchu barbaric costumes had been imposed on the Chinese people for so long that the true essence of Chinese culture might have been forever lost. Of course, modern Chinese historiography would look at such claims as anathema, within the centrality of the principle of the ‘unity of nationalities’ (minzu tuanjie), but the anti-Manchu movement was definitely a key ingredient of the Republican movement, and Rhoads does well to highlight all of its facets, including the unsavoury ones.

After an introductory chapter on the history of the Eight Banners, the first half of the book details the Manchu élite and court’s responses to growing pressures to reform the state and, within it, the status of the Bannermen. The latter had become an unbearable burden on the depleted public coffers, and generated much resentment among the non-Banner population. Other causes of Han resentment were of a more narrow, nationalist, and even racist, nature. Under Cixi and later under the regency of Zaifeng (Puyi’s father) massive reforms were introduced, which attempted to ‘recentralize’ and ‘remilitarize’ (to use Rhoads’s expression) the political process under the leadership of the Court. Such tardy attempts to reform the state by strengthening the centre were, as we know, already too late, but the year-by-year unfolding of the drama, especially between 1906 and 1911, makes fascinating reading.

The second half of the book presents a persuasive re-evaluation of the last days of the dynasty, and the consequences of the Xinhai revolution for the Manchus. The revolution was not, as it appears from many accounts, a relatively mild affair: it was neither bloodless nor entirely one-sided. Much Manchu blood was shed, and Rhoads’s reconstruction suggests strongly that anti-Manchu feelings among the Han were so rampant that a massive genocidal blood bath would not have been, under the circumstances, inconceivable. As it happened, in a number of places Manchus were targeted racially and summarily killed.

But Rhoads’s most important argument concerns the nature of the Manchus as a people and a social group. If a broad consensus has been emerging among scholars that the Han–Manchu relationship cannot be
reduced to the single point of cultural assimilation, what that relationship entailed, how it should be viewed, and what insights it can give us with respect to the political and cultural history of Qing China, are by no means settled issues. Rhoads contends that the Manchus should be viewed, right until the last two decades of the dynasty, as ‘equivalent to the banner people’ (p. 290). That is, neither as an ethnic group, nor as a political group, but rather as an occupational group and a hereditary military caste. Whereas originally the Banners were by no means an ethnically, linguistically, or ‘racially’ homogeneous group, by the late nineteenth century Manchus and Bannermen (qiren) came to be identified as a single ethnic group. It is at this time that the ‘occupational’ (and social) divide began to be seen with ‘ethnic’ or even ‘racial’ eyes. The attractiveness of this argument is that it safeguards the unity of the Banners as a social group without having to sacrifice its internal diversity to any Procrustean urgency to see Manchu identity embodied in a fixed set of ethnic markers.

Yet Rhoads’s argument will probably find its critics. In particular some may question his definition of the Bannermen as an occupational group and a military caste, in contrast to the ‘civilians’ forming the rest of the imperial subjects (p. 67). One problem with this definition is that the Banners ceased to hold a military monopoly when, at the beginning of the dynasty, the Green Standard Army was created out of the remnants of the Ming army. Later on it played key roles in important campaigns, and was regarded in every way as part of the military establishment. Although the Banners continued to be the elite fighting force, an analysis of their relationship with other sectors of the military, like the Green Standard and other non-Banner military forces, (e.g. the local militias and regional armies that emerged in the nineteenth century) would have added cogency to Rhoads’s argument.

On the other hand, Rhoads’s focus on the Banners as both a military caste and the chief locus of Manchu identity is likely to generate a prolific line of questions. For instance, if the survival of the Manchus at the top of the socio-political scale depended on their role as a military caste, it is surprising that the government played such a backward-looking and conservative role by not responding to pressures to modernize the Banners as an effective fighting force already in the early nineteenth century.

In conclusion, Edward Rhoads’s fascinating narrative has made an important contribution to the ongoing debate on the ‘Manchu question’ in Qing history. Readers interested in China’s late imperial social and political history, and ethnic relations, or simply wishing to know more about the astonishing ‘rise and fall’ of the Manchus and their empire will be rewarded by this solidly researched and very readable book.

NICOLA DI COSMO

ALAN RICHARD SWEETEN:

This monograph provides much-needed scholarship for the study of Chinese Christianity on two levels. First, it is a splendid addition to the growing
literature on the inner dynamics of Christian communities in rural China based on archival research and fieldwork. Sweeten builds on many current studies of Chinese Christianity—by Daniel H. Bays, Jessie G. Lutz and Rolland Ray Lutz, and others—which have shown that Chinese converts had enjoyed a great deal of autonomy in evangelistic work during the late nineteenth century. Drawing on the multi-volume series of the *Jiaowu jiao’an dang* (The Archive on Christian Affairs and Religious Cases) (hereafter *jiao’an* materials) and other relevant missionary sources, he argues that Catholicism had become far more indigenous at the local level than we once thought. The spread of Catholicism among large numbers of ordinary Chinese in the countryside was the direct result of evangelistic activities undertaken by native catechists and lay leaders rather than by foreign missionaries alone (pp. 22–30). These Chinese Catholics came from diverse social backgrounds: they were farmers, artisans, landholders, merchants, lower degree holders and widows. Rather than living on the fringes of the society, they were deeply integrated into the political, social, economic and cultural spheres of the local communities (pp. 37–9).

Second, it contributes to our understanding of different patterns of social conflicts involving Chinese Catholics at the local level, including litigation, intra-/inter-lineage disputes, domestic violence against women, church property disputes and Christian sectarian rivalries. Using more than forty religious cases from the *jiao’an* materials, Sweeten argues that many anti-Christian incidents resulted from ongoing resource conflicts that had long predated the arrival of Catholicism. In areas with a long history of resource disputes, the Catholics often employed conversion as a political strategy to foster communal solidarity and to attract external resources in local power struggles. This analysis of the Catholic involvement in local conflicts not only highlights the agency of the Chinese Catholic communities but also corrects the widespread misconception that anti-imperialism, anti-foreignism and cultural antagonism between Confucianism and Christianity were the ultimate grounds for conflict.

As well as analysing the endogenous origins of anti-Christian violence, Sweeten also explores a wide range of crisis management strategies employed by Catholic missionaries, Chinese officials, Catholics and non-Catholics to resolve disputes in different social settings. When disputes and violence escalated beyond the village communities, conflict resolution was largely influenced by the involvement of the Catholic missionaries and their resort to diplomatic pressure at both the central and provincial levels. The missionaries and Chinese central government exerted a more significant influence than the local officials in resolving anti-Christian cases, and this intensified the erosion of state power at the local level.

Overall, this study is based on a very solid foundation of empirical data. Sweeten presents his findings in readable language, using the *jiao’an* materials to illustrate the diverse experiences of the Catholic communities in late-nineteenth-century Jiangxi province. He handles these Chinese official sources effectively and demonstrates a critical awareness of their values and limitations. For example, the reliability of the *jiao’an* materials is a major methodological problem. Sweeten points out that the anti-Christian arguments probably reflect the Chinese official perspectives on the Catholic activities rather than the views of those Catholics and non-Catholics involved. Some correspondence from the Chinese district officials who investigated the anti-Christian disputes are obviously missing, and their views were only quoted by the provincial governors in their reports to the Zongli Yamen in Beijing. One should therefore be aware of the provincial officials’ bias that might have gone into the reporting.
Another methodological problem concerns the representativeness of the selected cases. There is no doubt that disputes against Catholic missionaries and Chinese converts were as widespread in Jiangxi province as they were in other parts of China throughout the late nineteenth century, and that many disputes resolved at village level were seldom reported to the Zongli Yamen in Beijing. Since these cases represent only a fraction of the overall situation, one should avoid making generalizations about the entire picture of the Catholic movement in Jiangxi. Instead, it is important to investigate the different patterns of anti-Christian conflicts and the changing power relations between Catholics and non-Catholics at the grassroots level (pp. 178–95). Bearing this point in mind, one can understand that in areas with a long history of rural violence, the desire for accommodation often co-existed with the impulse to confrontation. Whenever the Catholic identity took precedence over communal unity, an outbreak of anti-Catholic violence was only a matter of time. Wherever Catholics and non-Catholics were of equal strength, co-operation was essential for communal survival and compromise tended to be an option favoured by all parties in cases of disputes.

Sweeten has made a significant contribution to the writing of the social history of Christianity in China. This work is a breath of fresh air in terms of the approach, which examines the political impact of Catholicism in the interior of Jiangxi. Thoroughly researched, clearly written and strongly argued, it raises new questions and opens the possibility of further research into and comparisons with the expansion of Christianity in other parts of late imperial China.

JOSEPH TSE-HEI LEE

ALEXANDER PANTSOV:

Since access to Soviet archives improved so dramatically in 1991, numerous studies have attempted to shed new light on previously disputed topics. Alexander Pantsov has chosen to revisit a subject that featured prominently in the inner-party disputes that raged in the CPSU of the 1920s. This was true above all in 1926–27, when the so-called United ‘Left’ Opposition, whose most prominent members included Trotsky and Zinoviev, accused the Stalin-Bukharin leadership of grave policy errors regarding the Chinese revolution. The tactic of an alliance between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the nationalist Guomindang, supported by Stalin but increasingly rejected by Trotsky, lay at the heart of the debate. Trotskyist historiography has long condemned Stalin for betraying the Chinese revolution. It was on Moscow’s insistence, the Trotskyists claim, that the CCP tempered its actions in the Guomindang’s favour. When the Guomindang was supreme, it then massacred its communist allies. Historians sympathetic to Stalin have countered that Trotsky’s ultra-leftism was utopian. Stalin made the best out of a difficult situation. Pantsov aims to cut through these competing versions by using an impressive range of sources, from archives to private interviews with Russian and Chinese witnesses.

The opening two chapters set the scene by outlining, first, the main trends within pre-revolutionary Russian Marxism; and, second, how Marxist thought
initially took root amongst Chinese radicals. This material is particularly useful for listing which Marxist tracts were published in Chinese and when. The author’s sympathy for Trotsky is evident at this early stage, both in his appraisal of Trotsky’s standing in pre-October Russian Marxism, and in the claim that Marxism entered China in its Trotskyist variant. Not all historians will agree with these and other assessments. The view that Lenin’s concept of the party matched a Russian psychology that had no ‘idea about civil society and personal freedom’ (p. 21), is just one of several contentious statements. There is strong evidence to counter this, including the largely successful democratic elections to the Constituent Assembly (1917), as well as Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik inspired insistence upon socialist pluralism. Democratic slogans were not uncommon in protest activity, for example in trade unions, at the Kronstadt Uprising of 1921 and so on.

Pantsov is on firmer ground as he explores Bolshevik thinking on China from 1919–27. The eight chapters devoted to the various twists and turns of Russian involvement in the Chinese revolution contain numerous revelations and insights. I was struck most of all by the careful reading of Stalin’s hopes for the united front tactics. He had genuine revolutionary aspirations, and firmly believed that the CCP could capture power through the alliance with the Guomindang. Indeed, Pantsov accepts that there was a clear logic to Stalin’s line, and that Trotsky underestimated its ‘true leftist intentions’ (p. 129). It was therefore disappointing to discover that, in the conclusion, Pantsov reverts back to the black-and-white picture of Trotskyist historiography, arguing that the Chinese communists were ‘hostages of Stalin’s line’ (p. 212). However, reaching this point there is an excellent section on the Chinese communist community in Moscow, and how it became entangled in the CPSU’s inner-party battles. Pantsov pinpoints how Stalinist measures to involve Chinese students at international schools in the campaign against Trotsky resulted in the formation of a Chinese section of the Left Opposition. So disillusioned were the Chinese with Stalin’s dirty politics that they turned to Trotsky. However, the Chinese followers of Trotsky were never so numerous as to be in the majority. They shared the fate of Trotsky’s supporters in general: some recanted, some were exiled, and some were imprisoned. Some did make the trip back to China, where they kept a Trotskyist tradition alive within Chinese communism.

Pantsov’s book was first written (but never published) in Russian in 1993. He could have used its translation into English as an opportunity to incorporate some of the latest Western research. In this connection the analysis of Stalin and Trotsky’s (unknowingly) shared expectations for success in China could have been extended. In recent work on Shanghai, for example, Steve Smith has argued that both Stalin’s and Trotsky’s strategies overestimated the strength of the CCP. Smith’s research also throws into doubt the extent of Moscow’s control in China. Smith shows that local activists acted on their own initiative, suggesting a much greater degree of independence than has been allowed for within traditional historiography and by Pantsov (see, for example, Smith’s essay in T. Rees and A. Thorpe (ed.), International Communism and the Communist International 1919–43, Manchester, 1998). Finally, Pantsov’s conclusion could have explored the consequences of the debacle in China for subsequent Comintern thinking. After all, from 1928 the Third International dropped the united front strategy, arguing that in the coming period of revolutionary upsurges reformists were the main enemy. Communists must stand alone to win over the masses. It was a change in outlook that was adopted, it has recently been claimed, under the influence
of Trotsky’s critique of Chinese events (see, for example, K. McDermott and J. Agnew, *The Comintern. A history of international Communism from Lenin to Stalin*, Basingstoke, 1996, p. 70). It is ironic that the so-called Third Period of communist offensives may have been inaugurated with an eye on Trotsky’s writings on China, for it was the tactic of go-it-alone communism that Trotsky blamed for helping Hitler come to power in Germany. But this is another tale of tragedy for the world revolution.

IAN D. THATCHER

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**DAVID P. BARRETT and LARRY N. SHYU (ed.):**

*Chinese collaboration with Japan, 1932–1945: the limits of accommodation.*


This is an extremely important volume of essays which provides a vital new perspective on our understanding of the 1937–1945 Sino-Japanese war. Chinese collaboration with the Japanese occupation has been one of the great gaps in scholarship in recent decades. Since the pioneering works of John Boyle and Gerald Bunker in the early 1970s, there has been little concentrated work on the phenomenon of collaboration, although the work of Poshek Fu and Edward Gunn has greatly increased our understanding of the issues behind intellectuals’ collaboration with the occupiers. More broadly political and social studies of the phenomenon, however, have been lacking.

That has changed. Since the late 1990s, we have begun finally to see new work on this subject in China and in the West. The essays in David Barrett and Larry Shyu’s edited volume set a standard for empirical depth and analytical rigour which should be emulated by anyone venturing into this subject. The editors’ introduction establishes clearly the book’s agenda, offering a definition of what they understand by the term ‘collaboration’, drawing a contrast with the ‘collaborationism’ of intellectuals in Vichy France: ‘If collaborationism is to be understood as ideological identification with Japan, then the term has little application to China’ (p. 8). Instead, the book’s subtitle, ‘the limits of accommodation’, suggests the kind of collaborative model which the editors are proposing, where the Japanese presence was not welcomed, but sometimes tolerated and dealt with on a day-by-day basis, with the consciousness that Japanese promises of pan-Asian co-operation were proved hollow by the reality of Japanese behaviour in occupied China.

This approach is developed further by the articles on Nationalist China’s attempts to cope with the Japanese encroachment of the 1930s. Wang Ke-wen lucidly analyses the actions of Wang Jingwei, the president of the Japanese-controlled ‘Reformed’ Nationalist government from 1940 to 1944. Wang argues that it is a mistake to regard Wang as pro-Japanese; rather, he was aiming to win time to build up China’s strength to the point where it could afford a showdown with Japan. At the regional level, Marjorie Dryburgh suggests that the North China militarist Song Zheyuan was similarly caught in a vice between the calls for national loyalty and the reality of Japanese attempts to squeeze him into compliance: his collaboration with Japan was out of necessity, not conviction. During the war period itself, Huang Meizhen and Yang Hanqing show, there were sporadic low-key negotiations between
representatives of Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese, which failed because of the unbridgeable gulf between the two sides. While Chiang might have accepted de facto Japanese control over Manchukuo and parts of Mongolia, he was not prepared to budge over the occupation of the rest of China. The authors of this section convincingly show that tactics among these top-level politicians were pragmatic, and that sympathy with Japan was in short supply.

The same can be seen, ironically, in the governments that have been most excoriated, the client regimes which were set up under Japanese auspices after 1937. Timothy Brook deftly examines Liang Hongzhi’s Reformed government in central China, which was run mainly by regional and Nationalist politicians who had been sidelined under Chiang’s rule, and who now saw a chance to claw back some power. In contrast, as David Barrett argues, Wang Jingwei’s regime consciously took on the mantle of the Nationalist government, claiming that it had ‘returned’ to Nanjing, and even taking on the trappings of the old Chiang regime, such as the flag, to make the point. However, the regime was also forced to concoct a genealogy that came from Sun Yat-sen’s pan-Asianist musings of the early 1920s to try and justify the strong Japanese involvement with the regime. This argument was none too successful, and Lo Jiu-jing’s article wryly notes that if Wang had used a Hobbesian argument—that he had collaborated to try to save individuals from persecution by the Japanese, rather than to save the nation—his argument might look more convincing in retrospect.

Some of the freshest ground is broken in the final section, which examines local examples of collaboration and the reasons behind it. Parks Coble shows that while the rhetoric of East Asian co-prosperity was empty, Chinese businessmen could sometimes find a space to demand concessions from the Japanese who controlled commerce in Shanghai as the war worsened. Similarly, the Chinese film-makers examined by Poshek Fu who were coerced into making movies under occupation mostly managed to avoid making blatantly pro-Japanese pictures, using ‘non-political’ entertainment to send a message of passive resistance to the occupation. Keith Schoppa and Peter Seybolt provide fascinating microcosms of the occupation in two counties, Shaoxing and Neihuang, arguing that for many local elites, the war provided an opportunity to continue existing local feuds and power relationships by other means: the supposedly all-encompassing agenda of ‘national resistance’ was either sidelined or irrelevant to these communities. Finally, Odoric Wou offers a very useful methodological essay on sources for those who intend to carry out research themselves in this area.

This volume aims to raise questions as well as to answer them, and some further thoughts do come to mind. The first is that we need yet more studies: for example, in occupied Manchuria after 1931, many of the tactics used by the Japanese, and responses by the indigenous population, were very similar to those seen several years later in central China, suggesting that Manchukuo may have been a precursor to the cases seen here. Second, although true sympathizers with the Japanese were clearly very few in number, those that did exist might merit examination. For instance, could issues of gender or ethnicity intersect with or cut across national loyalties in some cases of collaboration? However, these are issues for a future volume. There is no doubt that this immensely rich collection is a valuable addition to the field, and it should be warmly welcomed by all serious students of the Sino–Japanese war.

RANA MITTER
CHIANG YEE:

*The silent traveller in London.*


Of all the literary figures employed by SOAS over the years, the most widely read on a pure headcount basis would probably be those Chinese writers who found success in the land of their birth, authors such as Lao She or Hsiao Ch’ien. Yet despite the relative success of the latter as a writer in English also, by far the most widely read such Chinese figure in this country must surely have been Chiang Yee. In fact, as the preface by Da Zheng to this reissue of one of the best-loved volumes from his ‘Silent Traveller’ series makes clear, Chiang first came to British public attention as a writer and lecturer on art and calligraphy—and also, one might add, as an illustrator, as his contributions to the printed text of S. I. Hsiung’s play *Lady Precious Stream* attest.

But in a land at that time almost entirely devoid of any sort of education with regard to China there was a considerable (albeit by no means clearly articulated) thirst for knowledge about the place, provided only that this knowledge was of a readily palatable type. Though others, such as Hsiung and Lin Yutang may have pointed the way, Chiang certainly hit upon an extraordinarily successful formula for sustaining this appetite amongst his readership. Ostensibly the mute witness to Western life is putting pen to paper in order to record his impressions of the West considered as an exotic experience—a genre with roots going back to Goldsmith and beyond—but Chiang works the conventions of this form with considerable skill so as to introduce a remarkable amount of information about China as well. He was evidently a born educator, and though the situation imposed upon him the burden of maintaining a relentlessly humorous, self-deprecating charm, his books are so packed with matters of substance—sly portraits of Laurence Binyon, George Eumorfopoulos and other contemporary luminaries, for instance—that they stand up surprisingly well to re-reading in our very different times.

Yet whilst his books sold well, their ingratiating prose and quirky illustrations have made them great favourites with collectors, so that copies at reasonable prices have lately been quite hard to come by. The reissue of one of his earliest classics, first published in 1938, in a bright and modern paperback format answers this problem admirably; Da Zheng’s brief new preface brings too the gratifying promise of a whole biographical volume in due course. Chiang was an unusually talented pioneer, and he deserves to be both read and remembered just as much as his more famous colleagues, especially here in SOAS itself.

T. H. BARRETT

STEPHAN FEUCHTWANG:

*Popular religion in China: the Imperial metaphor.*


Though naturally the publisher does not go to any great lengths to advertise the fact, the authorial preface to this work makes it entirely clear that this is a revised edition of the volume originally published (with the current title and
subtitle reversed) by Routledge in 1992. At first glance the material seems much the same, apart from a chapter on recent developments, and some may be tempted therefore not to replace the original with a new copy.

This would be a mistake. The new chapter contains not just the expected updating but also, for example, an important reconsideration of political ritual, especially that of the Maoist era, and its long-term effects. Even the chapters that follow the same outlines as before have unannounced fresh material in them, addressing points raised in earlier reviews. And either through an increased familiarity with the ideas propounded in the first version, a clearer layout, or discreet rewriting, the whole book comes across as presenting its main points with far greater clarity than before.

That is not to say that the book in its new form is likely to stand indefinitely as the ultimate statement of what Chinese religion is all about. There is still in my opinion plenty of room for historical research to help in explaining how the current very complex situation has been built up over a very long period of time, especially since the apparently less complex situation in times long past may help to identify patterns of interaction between different types of religion (primarily local and transregional, though that may not be the only polarity involved) which over recent centuries have come to overlap, coalesce, or even generate completely new levels of religious organization.

Nor would I expect the author to think of this rewriting as an end point, either, simply because of the prospect of further learning from the existing situation as it continues to evolve, with an intensity which continues to surprise most academics brought up in an era when religion was predicted to play no part in Chinese society by the year 2000. But as a sophisticated statement of how Chinese religion looks to us at the moment this study more than justifies its reappearance in a new guise. Anyone at all interested in the topic should firmly resist the temptation to stick with the original publication, and go out and buy its successor.

T. H. BARRETT

GREG AUSTIN AND STUART HARRIS:

*Japan and Greater China: political economy and military power in the Asian century.*


This is a very comprehensive book on the political and economic aspects of Japan’s relations not only with mainland China, but also with Taiwan and Hong Kong. In the first chapter the authors analyse the goals and interests of both countries against the structure, institutions and norms of the international and regional systems. Japan and China are both now judged to be *status quo* powers, but are nevertheless seeking important adjustments of certain aspects of these orders. Despite having reached—or possibly even passed—its peak, it is considered that Japan could play a more important role in certain areas of growing international significance if it could overcome its leadership problem. China’s global influence is growing and its co-operation is needed in addressing many global problems. In the second chapter, on images and attitudes, a thorough analysis of the legacy of Japan’s past is presented from the perspective of the Japanese as well as the Chinese. The authors conclude that the dynamics of these divergent perceptions will continue to play a
negative role in the bilateral relationship despite certain improvements. Public opinion in each country shows little interest in the other, and its influence on government policies is mostly negative or limiting because of the heavy influence of stereotypes. In the third chapter, on security relations, the authors conclude that despite pre-1945 history and many security disputes since then, war is no longer considered a means of settling conflicts. The chapter looks briefly at the territorial conflict, China’s nuclear tests in the mid-1990s, Japanese–Chinese security talks and the Japan–US alliance and TMD. The fourth chapter deals with Japan’s relations with Taiwan and Hong Kong. The authors point out that Japan changed its interpretation of the one-China policy by allowing the visits of high-level Taiwanese political leaders, which led to renewed Chinese distrust concerning Japan’s ultimate intention vis-à-vis China. On the other hand, Chinese missile tests in the Taiwan Strait led to a Japanese reconsideration of China and of Japan’s security.

The next three chapters are devoted to the aid, investment and trade aspects of the bilateral relationship. The authors argue that despite its importance in relative and in absolute terms, the direct political and strategic benefits to the bilateral relationship are insubstantial. The chapter on investment details the goals of both China and Japan and evaluates the importance of achievements for each. Japan’s investment in China is judged to have had relatively little impact on interdependence because it involved relatively small amounts despite having a positive influence on the relationship. The chapter on technology transfer analyses the positive factors (Japanese investment in China, government support) as well as the restrictive ones (Japanese concern about security and ‘boomerang’ implications). On trade, the authors do not find an interdependence that would offer significant scope for the exertion of either direct political or economic leverage. The Asian financial crisis, they argue, led to a downturn in trade and investment, but also re-emphasized the importance of the bilateral economic relationship for both sides. The authors argue that the level and composition of trade offer some incentives to deal positively with political problems, but the economic relationship is considered sufficiently unequal and as not having created enough trust to overcome all bilateral political problems.

In the chapter on ‘Japan, China and regional order’, the authors give a brief overview of moves towards greater regionalism and the attitudes of Japan and China, concluding that the leadership aspirations of both countries are constrained by regional and domestic factors. In their conclusions, the authors discuss three major external aspects determining the bilateral relationship: the role of the USA, the evolution of world order under the influence of market economics and international institutions, and the general process of internationalization. Change is seen as emanating from dynamic and structural sources. The authors predict that ‘the bilateral relationship will remain one that lacks respect and warmth’. While this may sound rather pessimistic, they seem to assume that the relationship will improve, albeit very slowly, as a result of generational changes and economic interdependence. The USA is seen as the major external influence on Japanese–Chinese relations, with the US–Chinese relationship causing serious strains in the trilateral US–China–Japan relationship due to fundamental disagreements over regional order and the Taiwan issue. Despite these difficulties the authors predict that Japan is likely to establish a more independent strategic position in Asia through a gradual expansion of its military activities abroad, albeit within the framework of the Japan–US alliance. Concerning China’s military modernization, the authors emphasize the backwardness of China’s technology,
and Japan’s advance in the area and therefore have greater sympathy with China’s security concerns vis-à-vis Japan than vice versa. Competition for regional leadership is predicted to be more indirect since, as they assert, ‘Japan and China cannot compete in the same spheres or choose not to’. Despite substantial differences between both countries, the authors predict that a business-like approach will prevail because of common interests and the lack of a belligerent constituency in either country. Factors which may disrupt co-operative behaviour are seen as lying outside of the control of both countries.

Some may find the book’s conclusions rather optimistic, too readily sweeping away issues of growing concern, notably in Japan (e.g. territorial issues in the East China Sea, trade frictions). One reason for this is probably the reliance on secondary materials (mostly of American origin) concerning the Japanese side of the relationship; another may be the sharpening of disputes since 1999 when most of the manuscript was probably completed. This is nevertheless a major contribution to a very complex field, and the publisher should be congratulated on making it available in an affordable paperback edition.

REINHARD DRIFTE

STEFAN KAISER, YASUKO ICHIKAWA, NORIKO KOBAYASHI and HILOFUMI YAMAMOTO:
Japanese: a comprehensive grammar.

Having recently discovered that the Japan Times reference grammars that I have recommended to students for the past few years are now out of print, it was with the hope of finding a replacement that I approached this new grammar, described as ‘a complete reference guide to modern Japanese grammar ... suitable for students at all levels, whether independent learners or on taught courses’. My standard recommendations were A dictionary of basic Japanese grammar (1986) and A dictionary of intermediate Japanese grammar (1995) by Seiichi Makino and Michi Tsutsui.

As with kanji dictionaries, we all get used to the way our favourite grammars are organized, and familiarizing oneself with the style of a new one can take some time. Overall this new grammar is very comprehensive, clearly set out and well organized, listing both general English grammatical terms (‘adjectives’, ‘comparison’) and specific Japanese items with a grammatical description, such as ‘nante [adverbial particle]’ and ‘tari [conjunctive particle]’. Despite the claim in the introduction that ‘the reader should be able to use this book fully without learning a new set of technical terminology’, some of the linguistic terminology used in headings (such as valency and cleft sentences) would certainly be unfamiliar to the non-specialist. However, the inclusion of these concepts simply extends the usefulness of the text to the more advanced reader without making it inaccessible to the student in the early stages of learning Japanese.

The examples are all taken from authentic written Japanese, and so are more interesting than some of the more contrived examples in other grammars and textbooks. The treatment of elements of classical Japanese that commonly occur in written Japanese is particularly good: for example, the classical adjective ending -ki (which is absent from Makino and Tsutsui). But this does
not mean that colloquial Japanese is neglected, and there is even a section on
dialect. One immediate advantage of the new work is that it combines the
perspectives of a non-native Japanese speaker and those of the three native-
speaker authors. This is perhaps why it includes sections such as ‘point of
view’ (more speaker-centred point of view) and ‘repetition [for emphasis]’,
which describe clearly and succinctly aspects of the ways in which Japanese is
used, in addition to the usual discrete grammatical structures.

I particularly like the way this new grammar brings together words of
similar function. For example, there is a long section on conjunctions,
subdivided into eleven points on the various conjunctions that express
addition, consequence, contrast, qualification, reason, paraphrasing, and so
on. This would be very useful to those trying to write in Japanese.
Unfortunately, these conjunctions are not all listed individually in the index,
so anyone wishing to find, say, *sono ue*, would need to know to look in the
‘addition’ subsection of ‘conjunctions’. Moreover, I could not find some
items that I would have expected, for example *ni mo kakawarazu*, via the
indices. No book can contain everything, and a quick search for a few items
revealed that *da ke ni* and *nanka* appeared in Kaiser *et al.* but not in Makino
and Tsutsui, whereas *darake* and *nan shiro* were in Makino and Tsutsui but
not in Kaiser *et al.*

One aspect in which the Makino and Tsutsui grammars excel is the
treatment of the nuances of similar items. For example, the treatment of the
usage of *V-yō* compared to *V-kata* in the intermediate grammar is very
precise. Kaiser *et al.* do not demonstrate instances where one structure is
required rather than the other. On the other hand, they do deal with some
items far more comprehensively than do Makino and Tsutsui. For instance,
The Kaiser *et al.* treatment of *mono* includes examples of its use in extended
idiomatic phrases, such as *mono ka*, *nai mono darō ka*, and so on.

The book contains some idiosyncrasies of typography. Sentences in *romaji*
do not begin with capital letters. This looks strange, particularly where there
is more than one sentence and a full stop is followed by a lower-case letter.
One of the author’s names is written as ‘Hilofumi’, presumably according to
his personal preference. Fortunately the use of ‘I’ instead of ‘r’ is not
continued in the text, where it might prove irritating.

Comparing this new work with my old favourites allowed me to discover
its advantages and disadvantages, and to conclude that the former outweigh
the latter. *Japanese: a comprehensive grammar* will certainly be appearing on
my new reading lists. But I will also be advising students to spend some time
familiarizing themselves with its organization and to be prepared to look
under broad category headings if the item they are looking for is not
immediately obvious. Perhaps they will even pick up some useful English
grammatical terminology on the way.

TESSA CARROLL

NANETTE GOTTLIEB:

*Word-processing technology in Japan: kanji and the keyboard.*

Nanette Gottlieb’s latest book is the third instalment in a series of works on
language policy (*Language and the modern state: the reform of written Japanese*,
London and New York: Routledge, 1991, and *Kanji politics: language policy*
In this book, she analyses the history of word-processing technology and its socio-cultural impact. Rather than detailing the technical aspects of the electronic handling of characters, the book deals with the varying reactions and forceful debate prompted by the appearance of word-processing machines, and their laboured adoption by society at large. She sets out to achieve this by letting ‘the voices of those involved in the debate speak for themselves’ (p. xvi) and so she illustrates the acculturation process involved in the shift from handwriting and typewriting to computer-typing, by interrogating the viewpoints and attitudes of intellectuals, white collar workers and policy makers. The technology’s history is narrated from the appearance of the laborious typewriter in 1915 to the constantly improving functions of the stand-alone word-processor (wapuro) and the personal computer (however, unfortunately the book does not dwell on the development of different functions in software packages).

The oddity of adopting a writing system based on a monosyllabic, isolating language to record a polysyllabic, agglutinative language was somewhat reconciled with the invention of kana in the tenth century. Nevertheless, that ‘foreign’ system (and the way it came to be combined with the indigenous phonetic scripts) was to remain the biggest hurdle in the development of an efficient system for the production of printed documents throughout the six decades it took to solve the input-output problem, the period which the book vividly portrays. An efficient machine had to allow easy retrieval of a great number of characters; it had to be able to ‘cut’ a sentence into meaningful components; it had to be taught how to interpret an amazingly high number of homophones, and it had to produce acceptable outputs for the ever increasing and diversified community of users. The book’s greatest achievement is the contextualization of this curve of technological improvements against the backdrop of the controversial debate about the Japanese script, the critical issues of national heritage and national identity, and the role of Japan in the global community.

The electronic handling of the Japanese script discharged specialist typists from the painstaking operation of the typewriter machine, but by broadening the community of users now directly engaging with the production of printed documents it opened a flood of complex and at times painful socio-cultural issues. From the outset, in the company environment, the wapuro prompted the problem of workforce specialization and reallocation. Lecturers welcomed the lightening of the manual load (the need to look up a kanji in a dictionary) as well as the intellectual load (the machine can be made to learn the user’s preferred kanji among the many homophones), but criticized the often inadequate (business oriented) dictionaries with which the machines were equipped. Advocates of romanization reforms were alternately delighted by the dysfunctional complexities of the conversion process (compared to the ease of alphabet typing) and shattered by the prospect that a relatively easy character retrieval dispelled the perception of kanji as a hindrance to modernization and progress. While the transfer of competence from the individual to the machine in the retrieval and output of kanji relieved many of a culturally induced ‘writing complex’, it also prompted fear of progressive loss of the national heritage, as many realized that the more familiar they became with a wapuro, the less confident they felt to write a kanji without checking it first, or even to type in the correct one among the available choices. In such a current framework, the fact that kanji need to be recognized rather than produced prompts difficult questions for subjects within and without Japan’s national borders: should teachers of Japanese across the world rewrite kanji curricula...
accordingly? Should the content of a writing class exclude the teaching of kanji altogether and concentrate on ‘writing’ as a creative process?

The book addresses all of these issues and many more with an accessible style and interpretive enthusiasm that translates government deliberations and dry lists of figures into a poignant account. However, it is at times also rather frustrating. The ‘multivocality’ that Gottlieb chooses to portray often becomes an end in itself and results in tedious repetition. Quoted comments and opinions are not consistently relevant, nor always arranged along a logical thread within and across chapters. Survey results occasionally invalidate an individual’s subjective opinion, yet we find both types of data equally listed one after the other. The resulting effect is not a dialectic juxtaposition, but a somewhat confusing panorama, where all sources contribute to illustrate a chapter perhaps democratically, but not necessarily organically.

Gottlieb seems to believe that wapuro have indeed changed Japanese society but she is unable to draw strong conclusive claims. Perhaps this is not wholly due to a legitimate non-committal attitude—the history is still very short—but to the almost complete lack of precisely targeted and big-scale users’ surveys on the part of researchers and governmental agencies alike, as lamented also in the book (p. 122). The omission for which Gottlieb is seriously guilty, however, is the question of the part women played in the history of the technology. Case studies in 1981 clearly showed the rather peculiar policy of diverting a company’s entire female staff population to training for the new machines (p. 63); women’s roles in the repatterning of work practices (and their consequent effects on family and society) were crucial in the 1980s (p. 175). Yet their voice is nowhere to be heard. Gottlieb’s sources are invariably male and, more often than not, middle aged. She fails to bring the issue to the fore, and does not even attempt to pursue some surprising and telling results of the users’ surveys (pp. 125, 181). We have to look at quotes from Tessa Morris-Suzuki (1988) to find the most interesting remarks on ‘gender and the keyboard’, sadly collapsed in only four or five pages of a concluding chapter ‘Changes in the workforce’ (p. 172).

Similarly, despite her notable awareness of the traps of Nihonjinron-oriented interpretations (p. 191), Gottlieb falls pray to the same old temptation and ends up polarizing the discourse between Japan and the USA. This results in disregarding yet again some important voices: this time, those of China and (South) Korea. Their discourse on the implications from the point of view of national identity of such a substantial change in the handling of the script is likely to be far more relevant to the Japanese reality than any Western one.

Finally, the work simply seems to suffer from poor editing: consistent repetitions and some obscure passages could easily have been spotted by an attentive reader. Surely the scale of the work deserved a more careful final revision.

BARBARA PIZZICONI

CHRISTIAN GALAN:
L’enseignement de la lecture au Japon. Politique et éducation.

In 1998 Christian Galan began to make a name for himself with two substantial and well-researched articles in Ebisu—études japonaises on the subject of education in the years before the Restoration. Here he presents a
revised version of his doctoral thesis (1997) on the practices and theories of teaching children to read in modern Japan. Educationally, he observes, Japan was 'modern' well before 1872, when the Gakusei, or fundamental law on education, was promulgated. Although he does not elaborate on this here, he seems to mean that Japanese education in the Tokugawa period partook of a functional modernity without having to align itself with Western practices, for he reminds us early on that, although the egalitarianism and individualism of early Meiji educational thinking were products of contact with the West, Japan owed neither utilitarian ideas nor self-help notions of personal advancement to the West. At any rate, as a result of his earlier published work, he brings to his discussion a healthy awareness of the characteristics and achievements of education in the Tokugawa period, some of which survived in the Meiji education system for some decades.

Galan’s focus is on the politics of education, the impact of educational ideologies and the effects that they had on the teaching of reading as seen through the various readers and textbooks published from the early Meiji period up to the 1990s. He does this by analysing each generation of textbooks, Ministry of Education directives and guidance issued to teachers and placing them in the context of shifting educational ideologies; he makes effective use of boxes in the text to present materials, such as instructions for teachers and model lessons, which cannot easily be incorporated into the narrative but which support and illustrate his arguments. A number of important points emerge from this book, the first of which is the centrality of reading in the curriculum. Of course, educational practices in the Tokugawa period, too, were founded on various forms of reading, but Galan demonstrates that educational thinking, practice and textbook production since 1872 were narrowly focused on teaching children during their compulsory education how to read, to the extent that in the 1870s around three-quarters of classroom time was devoted just to the Japanese language. Secondly, he shows how deeply influential were successive generations of educational theory, which Japanese educators kept up to date with and rapidly introduced to Japan. Thus theories and methods generated for the teaching of European languages were enthusiastically, if not always logically, applied to the teaching of Japanese. Well known is the influence of the American educational system in the 1870s as a result of the personal involvement of Mori Arinori as Minister of Education, but far less well known is the impact of Pestalozzi at that time, let alone that of German pedagogical theory in the 1880s: Galan critically explores the impact of waves of new ideas, tracing their effects on educational practices. And thirdly, Galan emphasizes that the teaching of reading was, for most of the period under consideration, not simply a matter of imparting a technique but was also inextricably tied to the nature of the material to be read: thus in the years following the Russo-Japanese war, textbooks offered children texts that idealized nature, extolled civic virtues or advocated national independence, while textbooks issued during the Pacific War sought to convey another set of values. Given the government control over the content of textbooks, formally introduced in 1890 when the textbook authorization system which still causes controversy today came into operation, the messages being sent by the school readers were clearly a deliberate choice.

This is not a short book, so I hesitate to suggest that Galan might have written more. There are, however, some issues touched on here that seem to me to deserve further consideration, and I mention them to encourage the author to explore them further. The first is the matter of sinological education. As Galan explains, for most of the Meiji period there was something of a
struggle going on between sinologists, and what one might call latter-day Kokugakusha, over the amount of Sino–Japanese vocabulary presented in textbooks, but by restricting himself to the public education system Galan inevitably overlooks the spread in the Meiji period of kangakujuku, private sinological academies which maintained the tradition of sinological reading and supplemented the teaching of the public schools. The second is the question of language. Although Galan is alive to the linguistic issues surrounding the teaching of reading, he gives hardly any space to Meiji perceptions of language, or even the genbun-itchi undo, the movement for the unification of speech and writing which was deeply involved in the presentation of writing for the benefit of larger numbers of readers. The issues here range from the abandonment of historical kana spelling for phonetic spelling to the introduction of a more orderly punctuation system; these aspects of the mise en page of school readers deserve closer examination. The third and final point is that the missing dimension are the recipients of all this education. Did the changing educational ideologies produce different results? Did the textbooks and classroom practices have the impact on children that educators expected them to have? Did children learning to read absorb the ideological messages they were supposed to be imbibing? The inevitable gap between intention and reception is notoriously hard to explore, but some clues might be found in autobiographies and the like.

Galan has covered a prodigious range of material with aplomb. His historical reach is long and thorough, and his reflections on the contemporary debate in Japan on methods of teaching children to read are well informed and sensitive. This is an important book, not only for historians of modern Japan, but also for those interested in schooling in contemporary Japan, and Galan is to be congratulated on his perception of the centrality of this question in Japanese educational thinking since the Meiji period.

P. F. KORNICKI

MIKE DOUGLASS and GLENDIA S. ROBERTS (ed.): Japan and global migration: foreign workers and the advent of a multicultural society.

This tightly organized and well edited volume explores the gulf between the powerful official myth of a homogeneous Japan, where foreigners may visit but never settle, and the reality of Japan as a magnet for workers with diverse skills from around the world. The editors set the scene, debunking with reference to clear facts and analytical logic the myths that Japan has no history of immigration, that the Japanese government can effectively prevent immigration, that large scale immigration of foreigners willing to do the jobs the Japanese shun will not be needed in the future, and (at the point of greatest friction), that immigration imposes high costs on Japanese society and economy. While the foreign population may be transient, geographically confined, even sanitized (through a preference for ‘Japanese’ workers made in Brazil), and the export of manufacturing jobs has kept many blue collar migrants at home, the stock of migrants has survived the post-bubble recessions of the 1990s. In the future it can only increase, as foreigners fill the many new jobs that cannot be exported, servicing Japan’s dwindling and fast-ageing ‘native’ population. The advent of a multicultural society is clear, but
its eventual form is not, given the challenge which the demographic facts present for inherited political and social institutions and the core identity of a people steeped in an exclusive ‘Japaneseness’.

The historical and global context for the contemporary domestic issue of societal change fills the remainder of Part 1. Yamawaki reminds us of past expressions of prejudice against Asian immigrants, especially Koreans (Japan’s largest minority), from which useful lessons remain to be learned. Weiner situates Japan-focused migration squarely within a globalizing migration system featuring differentiation and feminization as cardinal attributes, with which both the bureaucracy and the general population struggle to come to terms, leaving the migrants themselves adrift in a legal, administrative and social limbo. Lie exposes the dark side of the homogeneity myth, where race and class consciousness combine to depict (non-white) foreigners as inferiors from lower class lands, while Douglass situates the distinctive historical patterns of female migration to and from Japan within gender relations which confine women (Japanese or otherwise) to subservient roles in the service of men.

Part 2 focuses on the sociology of contemporary migrant communities in Japan, at home and in the workplace. Yamanaka employs her own survey data to paint a compelling picture of the Nikkeijin, the offspring of the Japanese diaspora in Latin America who took advantage of official favour (and relative public acceptance) as migrant workers during the boom years of the late 1980s, but now share disproportionately in the burdens of recession, and the disappointment of rejection. They display a hesitant pattern of circular and repeat migration between two countries and continents, in neither of which are they totally at home. Adopting a novel approach, Pollock examines the everyday negative characterization of Asian migrants in the pages of a comic book, World apartment horror, where people whose qualifications and competences would make them respectable and ordinary in another world are reduced by racist depiction to a status below that of common criminals. Machimura explores variations in settlement patterns between different foreign groups in Greater Tokyo, stressing the significance of the legal status of workers and the local importance of their employers as key determinants of incorporation into local communities, with Nikkeijin living in company towns occupying the least disadvantaged position, though with plenty of problems to contend with. Murphy-Shigematsu reflects on the lives of people whose very existence challenges the rigid boundaries of race and culture: those of mixed birth and multi-ethnic identity. While in principle the naturalization process can accommodate diversity of background, in practice officials exert strong influence to defend the orthodoxy of a homogeneous society, by encouraging the use of acceptable Japanese surnames for example, a practice honed in earlier dealings with the Korean minority.

In the concluding part of the book, three authors examine aspects of government policy and community responses to the facts of migration. Terasawa highlights the contradictions between labour law, civil law and immigration law which place foreign workers at a hopeless disadvantage if left without proper legal support. Tegtmeyer Pak demonstrates that the national framework of policy and its implementation can be tempered, however, when local governments seek alternative solutions through ‘local internationalization’ as a means to create space for foreign workers within the structures of mainstream society. Finally, Roberts explores the non-governmental support infrastructure for foreign workers, an infrastructure which remains small and is dominated by the immediate concerns of unfair
dismissal and exit from Japan, rather than advocacy for a sea-change in attitudes towards the other in Japanese communities. For women seeking escape from the excesses of the sex industry, however, this is surely a welcome start.

The book paints an unsettling picture, of a future which cannot help but include workers from abroad, the promise of a multicultural society, but no clear map of how to get there. Perhaps the critique to underpin real change will come from outside, from amongst the new generation of Japanese who have spent years in education abroad, and observed that the mindset of American segregationism and the absurdly racist self-justifications of European empire have had their day, and that diversity creates opportunities for more richly textured and genuinely harmonious communities, not just the threat of riots and the despoilation of cherished myths. If nothing else, this book is a clear demonstration of the distance that Japanese society still has to travel from a present that is uncomfortable for migrants and natives alike.

RICHARD WILTSHIRE

BRIAN BOCKING:
The oracles of the three shrines: windows on Japanese religion.

In Japan the term sanja takusen (oracles of the three shrines) normally refers to a hanging scroll depicting three Shinto deities (usually Amaterasu, Hachiman and Kasuga) along with oracular texts. Brian Bocking argues in this short book that, through a study of these scrolls (examples of which can be found from the early fifteenth century to the present), one can gain insights into the nature of Japanese religion in general. His particular intention is to open up the ‘hitherto unknown field of sanja takusen studies’ (p. 9) and to use the iconography and texts of the scrolls as a means of analysing Shinto and commenting about its interactions with other traditions and about the general nature of Japanese religion. Bocking argues that, because the sanja takusen scroll motif has existed as a distinctive iconographic form over many centuries, ‘it can provide a fixed point and focus of study for certain strands of Japanese religion (including “Shinto”’)’ (p. 15), and one of the strengths of the book relates to the ways in which it outlines and demonstrates the variations in the depiction of the scroll motif over the centuries, and how this fits in with changes in the broader patterns of Japanese religion.

Bocking, who dates the origins of the sanja takusen to the early fifteenth century, argues that the scrolls were heavily influenced by esoteric Buddhism. Certainly the virtues (honesty, purity and compassion) that they promote (and that are associated with the deities they depict) are closely associated with the kemmitsu system of esoteric Buddhism in Japan (pp. 40–41). As such, they (and Bocking’s research) provide backing for the well-known thesis propounded by the Japanese historian Kuroda Toshio, that Shinto in the medieval period was largely a product of, and heavily influenced by, esoteric Buddhism.

Bocking also provides us with a broad overview of the scrolls and the differing iconographic forms they have taken at different eras. Even in exploratory contexts this involves covering a large field, and the task has been made more difficult because the scrolls appear largely to have been ignored by art historians, whose tendency to focus on objects because of their aesthetic value may at times (as Bocking points out with regard to the sanja takusen
scrolls) lead them to ignore items that might be stylistically deficient yet possess great religious significance. Overall, too, there seems to have been very little historical research on the association of the three shrines themselves (normally these are the Iwashimizu Hachiman, Ise and Kasuga shrines) and the oracles, with Bocking knowing of only one modern Japanese article in this area—and this, according to the bibliography, is a mere four pages long. This of course makes further historical studies essential, if only to ensure that the brief article by Nagashima Fukutarō (itself a revision of an earlier article) which Bocking cites frequently and on which he clearly relies a great deal, is dependable enough to build a historical account upon.

This, in a nutshell, is a major problem of the book. Bocking is at pains to assure us that this is an exploratory book—and at not much more than 100 pages of text there is little scope for much more than exploration and the mapping out of themes that require fuller research and analysis. The decision to go for brevity and exploration has the merit of enabling a book to be produced sooner rather than later, and for us to be alerted to the potential importance of the subject. The downside, of course, is that in order to examine the ways in which the sanja takusen have been depicted, received, used and commented upon at different eras—all issues that are critical if they are to be used in any comprehensive way as a window into Shinto and Japanese religion in general—one needs rather more than an exploratory work. The problem is that this book leaves many unanswered questions and does not provide the sort of depth of coverage and analysis that some people (such as this reader) would want to see before they would allow themselves to be swayed by arguments about the supposed importance of the scrolls.

A good example here is the translation Bocking provides of what appears to be the first full commentary on the oracles. Dating from 1650, this gives us a valuable insight into how someone in that era viewed the oracles and, as such, the translation is extremely valuable. Yet it also appears somewhat isolated and lacking in contextual perspective, because little material or discussion is provided to answer such questions as: to what extent did this commentary influence subsequent ones? Indeed, did it at all? Can this text be taken as a representative example of the ways in which the oracles were viewed and interpreted at that time, or was it a one-off? Without the further study of other commentaries, such questions are left hanging in the air, leaving us unable to assess the true significance of the translated commentary. There were certainly other commentaries from a similar era (a point Bocking recognizes when he alludes to other commentaries of the period, including a Buddhist one from 1679 (p. 78), which, as a footnote informs us, he has not been able to pursue) which might have provided such context and/or examples of how attitudes changed during the critical Edo period when the scrolls, according to Bocking, became so widespread and popular.

The lack of historical data available to the author at the time the book was written leads, somewhat inevitably, to some rather speculative assumptions. For example, we are told that in its heyday the sanja takusen commanded instant attention (p. 15), although what evidence there is for this as presented in the book is slight. Elsewhere we are told that ‘there is evidence that the bushi were, like everyone else, aware of the sanja takusen and that they engaged in religious practices related to the shrines and their oracles’ (p. 79), but again, with little evidence and few references provided to justify this statement. Such criticisms do not mean that I am denying the importance of the sanja takusen cult, so much as asking for substantive evidence to justify the assertions Bocking makes about it at different periods in history.
The book certainly attempts to cover a lot of ground in the context of how the oracles relate to the wider pantheon of Shinto deities at different periods, and how the scrolls were popularized by Yoshida Shinto, and especially by Yoshida Kanetomo, whose adoption and use of this motif provides yet another example of his religious entrepreneurship. The study takes us through the Meiji Restoration, the ‘invention’ of a formalized, state-sponsored Shinto, and the problematic issues facing Shinto in the modern day as it struggles to maintain support in an era when it has effectively lost the raison d’être of its post-Meiji, pre-1945 past (i.e. providing identity to the state) and has struggled to find a new identity (p. 108). At the end of the book Bocking also offers an intriguing suggestion that Shinto (because of such weaknesses) might even develop a new rapprochement with Buddhism that would mirror the integrative nature of the two prior to the Meiji Restoration (p. 109). This point, interesting as it is, is of course highly speculative and in its apparent emphasis on the weakness of Shinto in the modern day it contradicts the assertions of other recent authors (notably John Nelson in *Enduring identities: the guise of Shinto in contemporary Japan*, Honolulu, 1999) who have argued that Shinto has performed more effectively than the other major traditional religion (Buddhism) in Japan in recent times. I am unconvinced by both arguments: I have already questioned Nelson’s claims as to the current strength of Shinto (Reader, Review of Nelson, *Enduring identities*, Monumenta Nipponica, 55/4, 2000, 609–11) and here I also question the speculation that Shinto is so weak that it will seek a rapprochement with Buddhism. I would certainly require some cogent evidence before I could begin to consider Bocking’s speculation as remotely possible, and as yet I have seen none. Nonetheless, here is another topic worthy of debate that will hopefully be subjected to some focused academic research before long.

The book has a number of minor faults in bibliographic terms (various missing or misplaced macrons) and in the references, where a number of chapters and journal articles lacked page numbers, years of publication and/or, in the case of some Japanese references, journal edition numbers. There was one particularly confusing footnote (Footnote 345—all notes being numbered consecutively throughout the book) which thanks a colleague for ‘this reference to the work of Togawa Ansho’, but which provides no mention Togawa’s work, which is listed neither in the references nor elsewhere.

The references themselves exhibit some large gaps, with very little cited that was published between 1995 and 2000 (including a number of recent works on Shinto—including Nelson’s—that surely ought to have been considered, especially in the light of the claim made (p. 2) that Shinto has not been as well covered in the academic literature as have other strands of Japanese religion).

Overall, the strength of this book lies in its attempt to provide an introductory study that opens the sanja takusen up to wider discussion, while its main weakness is its failure to provide enough evidence to underpin the argument that this is a topic worthy of more detailed research. While Bocking has succeeded in alerting me to the possibility that the scrolls might be a vital avenue for exploring wider issues in Japanese religion, he has not done enough to convince me of his argument. Certainly the topic requires a more developed and detailed study—especially in terms of how the scrolls have been used and treated over the centuries, and of the ways in which commentaries on them have influenced their use—in order to substantiate such arguments. As such, I hope that Bocking will take forward the discussions and arguments set out
in this book, by examining the various historical materials and commentaries that relate to the sanja takusen over the centuries, so that he can produce the sort of in-depth study that this subject would appear to require.

IAN READER

KYOKO INOUE:

*Individual dignity in modern Japanese thought: the evolution of the concept of jinkaku in moral and educational discourse.*


Every society struggles to find a balance between collective ‘well-being’ and individual needs. And such a struggle is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in moral education provided by the state. Thus Kyoko Inoue traces this conflict in Japanese society by examining the transformation of the meaning of *jinkaku* as it occurs in essays by leading intellectuals, in government documents, and in school textbooks since the late nineteenth century. A word invented to define the new social arrangements after the Meiji Restoration, *jinkaku* was destined to guide and be guided by collective definitions of individualism and social order.

The author begins by pointing out the tension between hierarchy and egalitarianism inherent in the word itself. Thus even as *jin* means person(s) and *kaku* status/rank, *jinkaku* nonetheless emphasizes moral worth, a quality that makes a person a respected individual in society. Yet this usage, a legacy of the Taisho democratic movement, is barely 100 years old: egalitarian forces emphasize status in moral terms.

The book is divided into four chapters, arranged chronologically: chapter i considers the pre-war period during which *jinkaku* became a key word in Japan’s *shūshin* (moral) education; chapter ii describes American efforts to reform Japanese education during the occupation period; and chapters iii and iv examine the post-war period when the word reappeared in government reports and textbooks to transmit the idea of a ‘public’ man desirable for the country’s economic recovery, only to be replaced by more definite words to assert individualism such as *kosei* (individuality) and *ningensei* (humanity).

The fact that the author begins by debating moral education and ends with a discussion of textbooks on social and civic studies reveals the close connection between the role of morality and politics in Japan.

*Jinkaku* first appeared in around 1889, and translated the concept of a legal person to be used in the civil code, according to the author. This highly technical term soon acquired moral connotations. Inoue Tetsujiro, the author of the *Chokugo Engi*, an official commentary on the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, was the first textbook writer to use *jinkaku* in 1897. In his usage, Inoue echoed the major civil strategy of the Meiji leaders: to encourage individual talents in order to ensure social progress. Thus ‘Perfecting *jinkaku* was the most important purpose in life, which could only be accomplished within one’s own state and society’.

As the author points out, such ‘public’ morality does not always sit easily with American concepts of democracy. *Jinkaku* and human rights appear in
different chapters of the same textbooks in the 1950s, with the former assigned to ‘social’ problems and the latter to politics and the Constitution. Nevertheless the word *jinkaku* began to disappear from government guidelines in the late 1960s, and from the textbooks in the 1980s. Yet communal morality is still present. Thus the author concludes her final chapter as follows:

At the end of the twentieth century, what has emerged in Japanese textbooks is a sense of communitarian democracy emphasizing social rights. They teach that the central idea of democracy is respect for individuals and protection of their fundamental human rights. ... But they do not encourage people to protect their rights against the government. Rather, they indicate that cooperation between the government and people is the key to bringing about a just and a fair society for all people.

This conclusion—social unity promoted by government and people, the image confirmed by the textbooks—may be supported by many observers of Japanese society. A number of historians and political scientists have pointed out the prominent role of ideologies, including moral education, in modern Japan in ensuring social cohesion.

Nonetheless the book offers a broad and illuminating picture of Japanese political thought and social history in the twentieth century. In particular it records ways in which the Japanese looked at their ‘common’ life in response to social and political change. For instance, during the Taisho period workers began to use the word to defend their rights and to demand better working conditions (ch. i). After the war Japanese educators debated fiercely whether the aim of education should be ‘perfecting *jinkaku*’ or ‘developing *ningensei*’ (ch. iii). They were searching for new words and reassessing old ones in order to formulate and share ideas. Thus the concept of *jinkaku* evolved because of changed perceptions of the relationship between collective and individual needs.

Here I have a few minor caveats. The author appears to me to give scant attention to the evolution of the tension between hierarchy and egalitarianism, particularly as it relates to the social and political background the book itself describes. Instead the tension is described as being inherent in Japanese society, and changes are often subsumed into a general failure to recognize it. Similarly, in order to make more telling the final emphasis on communitarian democracy, the author might have demonstrated more fully how the conceptual differences between Japanese and American attitudes are manifested in the textbooks. The book does point out that American textbooks focus on actual court cases, whereas the Japanese introduce personal accounts to explain human rights. It would have been helpful, however, to include further specific examples so that the reader could appreciate more clearly the Japanese failure to recognize the tension. It might also have been beneficial to identify the writers (or editors) of the textbooks described in ch. iv; their views were reflected in the textbooks they wrote, and the author mentions the various nuances the textbooks transmit. For example, the writer of the Osaka Shoseki textbook of social studies in 1972 was clearly challenging ‘communitarian democracy’ when he said: ‘Fundamental human rights are eternal, inviolate rights. They must not be arbitrarily infringed in the name of public welfare’. Naming these authors would help us better to understand the Japanese failure, or struggle, recognizing that it is people, not traditions and cultures alone, who are ultimately responsible for shaping the common life.

HIROMI SASAMOTO-COLLINS
The articles collected in the book under review have nothing in common other than that they were written and dedicated to the two ‘old masters’ of Korean studies in France, Li Ogg and Daniel Bouchez. The book honours the two men (both born in November 1928) who not only initiated Korean studies at university level, but with their scholarly works set high standards for the study of Korea’s history and literature.

Li Ogg (who passed away two days after the book’s dedication ceremony) specialized in the history of Koguryô, and opened with his research new methodological avenues for approaching Korea’s ancient history. In contrast, Daniel Bouchez devoted his scholarly life to the study of classical Korean literature, in particular to the novels of Kim Man-jung (1637–92). Both Li and Bouchez, moreover, were instrumental in founding the Association for Korean Studies in Europe (AKSE) and served as council members and presidents.

The collection contains sixteen contributions in English, German, and French, and seven in Korean (with French and English summaries). Each article features, where appropriate, a glossary and a bibliography. The chapters are arranged alphabetically according to the authors’ surnames—an arrangement that made a more meaningful clustering according to themes impossible.

In view of the wealth of themes addressed, issues raised, and interpretations offered in this volume, it is impossible to review each article in detail. Because the titles provide a fairly good idea of the contents, it suffices here briefly to introduce the articles by title only, grouped around subject matters:

André Fabre’s (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris) article entitled ‘La Terre de Pak Kyôngni, problèmes de traduction’ opens the collection by raising the problem of translating modern Korean literary works into French. A similar subject is discussed by Helga Picht (Humboldt-Universität Berlin) in ‘Probleme der Übersetzung Koreanischer Lyrik (Ein Vorschlag zur Diskussion)’ in which she tries out ways of translating poems by strictly keeping to the number of syllables. Patrick Maurus (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris) analyses the early poems of Ch’oe Namsôn in ‘Sur les premiers poèmes de Ch’oe Namsôn’. Shim Seung-Ja (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris) analyses proverbs in ‘La conception de la vie des Coréens à travers des proverbes’. The contribution of the late Frits Vos (Leiden University) is entitled ‘Latent Dutch in Modern Korean’. L. R. Koncevich (Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow) studies problems of the Hunmin chôngüm in ‘Some problems raised by the study of “Hunmin Chông’un”’.

Three articles are devoted to mythology: James H. Grayson (University of Sheffield), ‘A preliminary study of the structures of the foundation myths of ancient Korea’; Marianna Nikitina (University of St Petersburg), ‘The “Bowl with a Sandal” (National Museum of Kyôngju) in the Light of the Myth of the Female-Sun and her Parents: on the problem of the ritual embodiment of the heroes of the myth’; and, finally, A. F. Trotsevich (Institute of Oriental
Historically oriented are the contributions of Werner Sasse (Hamburg University), ‘Trying to figure out how kings became kings in Silla’; Boudewijn Walraven (Leiden University), ‘The River of Living History: Sijo, history and historical consciousness’; Henrik H. Sørensen (National Museum, Copenhagen), ‘Problems with using the Samguk Yusa as a source for the history of Korean Buddhism’; and Zdenka Klošlová (Prague), ‘Introducing Korea in Bohemia and Czechoslovakia: from the mid-19th century to the 1950s’.

Finally, there are three contributions treating miscellaneous subjects: Keith Howard (SOAS, London) ‘North Korea: Songs for the Great Leader, with instructions from the Dear Leader’; Alexandre Guillemoz (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris), ‘La descente d’un chamane Coréen’; and Bernard Vincent Olivier (Université de Montréal), ‘Les Coreéens de la Chine de Deng Xiaoping: difficultés d’Adaptation’.

The articles in Korean were contributed by Kim Sŏktŭk (Yonsei University, Seoul), ‘The system and meaning of adverbs in Korean’; Chang Yunik (Inch’ŏn University, Inch’ŏn), ‘Baudelaire’s influence on Korean symbolist poetry in the 1920s’; Chŏng Kyŏbok (Korea University, Seoul), ‘The relationship between the Changsŏn ḍamŭirok, the Wŏn’gammok and the Hwajinjŏn concerning the Preface and the Epilogue’; Yi Hŭjae (Sungmyŏng Women’s University, Seoul), ‘The weaknesses of early printing in Korea’; Martine Prost (Université Paris 7), ‘On the acquisition of the Korean: where do the real difficulties lie for French speakers?’; Hŏ Man (Pusan University, Pusan), ‘The Basis of North Korean diplomacy and perspectives for change’; and Hong Chaesoŏng (Seoul National University, Seoul), ‘Two uses of yaksok: promise and appointment’.

The chief editor of this voluminous multinational and multilingual publication, André Fabre, must be congratulated for the care with which he has seen this complicated enterprise to a happy end.

MARTINA DEUCHLER

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

DAVID SMYTH (ed.):
The canon in Southeast Asian literatures: literatures of Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

This anthology is a welcome addition to the small collection of works on modern literature in South-East Asia. It also is an excellent source of information on works available in English translation, although it is by no means limited to these. All of the essays were originally written as papers for a workshop on ‘The canon in South East Asian literatures’ convened at SOAS in 1995. The anthology reflects both the strengths and the weaknesses of its origin: superb essays are found alongside unremarkable ones; and authors have chosen to write papers about issues that most interest them, so
that the intended theme of ‘canon’ is predominant in some, perfunctorily addressed in others, and all but absent in a few.

An introduction would have been welcome in place of the brief preface in which the diffuse subjects of conference papers are simply listed: ‘literary historiography, literary criticism, the reception of prose fiction, colonialism and Western influence, literary debate, censorship, literary prizes and state involvement, literary studies and the education system, gender issues and indigenous aesthetics’ (p. viii). Despite the absence of a critical introduction, this is a remarkable collection of essays which will be of great interest to scholars of both insular and mainland South-East Asia, and a valuable source of materials for those who are teaching courses in literature, cultures, anthropology and history.

We begin with what seems to this reviewer the outstanding essay of the collection: Anna J. Allott’s ‘Continuity and change in the Burmese literary canon’ is clear, elegant, and accessible to the non-specialist. She presents the relationship between the Burmese government, writers, and their audience over the past several decades with a perfect balance of thoroughness and concision. Allott outlines and explicates censorship policies that have grown ever more stringent over the past four decades, particularly the military dictatorship’s concerns with ‘decadence’ (thayok pyet in Burmese): ‘...all those aspects of the western way of life and culture which were not acceptable to the Burmese regime—“decadent, degenerate, corrupt, immoral, not conforming to the norms of Burmese culture”. ... All such “decadent” writings were felt, and are still felt to present a threat to the Burmese way of life.’ Decisions as to what, in the eyes of this politically fundamentalist regime, constitutes ‘decadence,’ are entrusted to government censors. Only a few courageous and creative writers manage to evade the censors by dint of ingenious and subtle satire.

It is difficult to realize that the same country is being discussed by Annemarie Esche, in ‘Myanmar prose writing’. Not a single mention of the dictatorship’s stranglehold over the arts, or the labyrinthine system of censorship described so well by Allott, mar Esche’s contention that ‘principles’ for writers, designed by the government, ‘prevent nothing and give no guidance’. Then follows a list of ‘possibilities’ generously provided to Burmese writers, including frequent book publication, a proliferation of magazines, lending libraries, annual government awards ‘to educate and to propagate knowledge to the general public’, and writers’ seminars, all organized and controlled by SLORC (at the time of her writing), or its successor.

There is only one essay on Vietnamese literature, but it is very good: Dana Healy’s brief but informative ‘Literature in transition: an overview of Vietnamese writing of the renovation period’. Healy begins by describing the literature of socialist realism in the North after 1954, and in all of Vietnam after 1975, then describes the gradual transition to the character-driven, realistic ‘renovation literature’ that faithfully mirrors the post-war Vietnamese experience. By the early 1980s, writers were emboldened to write fiction exposing corruption, poverty, despair, and the bitter fruits of the victory of 1975 head-on. Readers responded to these works with passion and gratitude. Writers were supported by pressure from outside Vietnam to advance freedom of expression, and even from some strong-minded Vietnamese officials who believed that their cause was just. Predictably, however, ‘Surprised and frightened by the alacrity and vigour with which writers started exploring the new situation, the Party felt compelled to re-think its [newly tolerant] line’
Leading writers were imprisoned, including Duong Thu Huong, author of popular novels that had already been translated into English (Paradise of the blind, Novel without a name), and were being widely read in the West. But it was too late to return to iron controls over all artistic productions including fiction and poetry. Writers were grudgingly released from jail, and a stand-off ensued that continues to the present day.

Luisa J. Mallari’s ‘Literary excellence as national domain: configuring the masterpiece novel in the Philippines and Malaysia’ is a fine comparative study of literature as an expression of nationalism. She argues that the ‘masterpiece novel in the Philippines and Malaysia is constructed not simply as a “major” work that signifies literary excellence, but also as a reconciliation of the multiplicities that allow it to be a national treasure’. Lisbeth Littrup’s ‘Development in Malay criticism’ is an orderly, well-constructed depiction of the interplay between literary criticism, literary institutions, and the Malay writers in the new Malaysia with particular emphasis on ‘feminist’ criticism. While Littrup focuses on writing by women, the appreciation of women’s writing in Malay society, and feminist criticism, she also addresses the literary debate over ‘Islamic literature’. The essay is grounded in a discussion of the ‘new’ literature of the early twentieth century, and the considerable influence of Abdullah Munshi, who ‘came, during his boyhood, under the influence of Sir Stamford Raffles’. (author’s bold.)

The same individual is the sole subject of Ungku Maimunah Mohd. Tahir’s thoughtful essay, ‘The construction and institutionalisation of Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir Munshi [spelled ‘Munshi,’ in Littrup’s essay] as the father of modern Malay literature: the role of westerners’. This paper presents a detailed description of the life, work and legacy of Munshi, whose best known works are the memoirs he was encouraged to write by his Western mentors, and reviewed by them in manuscript form to give him the benefit of their expertise in matters of memoir writing and autobiography. Despite the disdain of some Malay colleagues who called him by the ‘derogatory sobriquet, tali barut Inggeris or “the stooge of the English,”’ (p. 100) Munshi has survived into the twenty-first century as the generally recognized ‘father of modern Malay literature’.

‘The regulation of beauty: J. Kats and Javenese poetics’ is a meticulous essay by Bernard Arps. His discussion of Kats’s work on traditional Javanese literature and poetics begins with a description of tembang, ‘stanzaic, melodico-metrical verse forms, which require that verse lines consist of specified numbers of syllables, contain word boundaries in particular position, and end with specified vowels’ (pp. 116–7). Tembang was considered by many (including virtually all foreign scholars, and those Malay who wished to emulate Western literary conventions) to be unsuitable for the expression of twentieth-century ideas. Although the essay is quite detailed, it is accessible to the non-specialist. Arps concludes that Kats, a very influential Dutch scholar in Java, could only write a ‘poetics’ of Javenese literature that was solidly grounded in Western literary aesthetics, his ‘first language’, however he might admire the subject to which he devoted his intellectual energies.

George Chigas and Peter Koret’s essays on Cambodia and Laos begin with an exploration of the pre-modern canon in each country, consisting primarily of Buddhist works, versions of the Ramayana and other dance dramas, and folk tales that were located almost exclusively within the oral tradition. In the colonial era, the French were relatively indifferent to the literary arts in these countries, by comparison with their considerable interest in the development of literature in Vietnam, which had been accumulating an
impressive literary history for a thousand years, and required only an alphabet and French models of fiction and poetry in order to take its place on the world literary stage.

Chigas describes the evolution of Kambujasuriya, the periodical of the Buddhist Institute in Phnom Penh, from its founding in 1927, as an expression of the ‘French academic study of things Khmer’, to its evolution, by the 1960s, into a journal concerned with the contemporary writer as an individual. Cambodian authors’ resentment of French deprecations of their native literature, and their simultaneous desire to emulate Western prose and poetry, showing themselves capable of ‘real’ novels and short stories, are revealed in poignant excerpts from their writings and correspondence.

Peter Koret’s essay, ‘Books of Search: convention and creativity in traditional Lao literature’ is not only interesting in itself, but important because so few finely researched and thoughtful essays have been written on Lao literature by either Lao or foreign scholars. Koret describes the ways in which the oral tradition exerts a continuing force in Laos: the Lao, he says, are of the opinion that there are no new stories, only old stories well told. He focuses on the paramountcy of theme and formula in story-telling; and also on parallelism, a stylistic device that increases in complexity and ingenuity with the skill of the author. Parallelism is described in wonderful detail. The only drawback, in my opinion, is Koret’s use of a comparatively uncommon system of transliteration that readers may find daunting. He concludes with the assertion that Lao literature has been unfavourably compared with Thai literature for too long, and that when Lao creativity is better understood, Lao composition will be better appreciated on its own merits.

The most aptly titled essay in the anthology is Muhammad Haji Salleh’s ‘Shot by foreign can(n)ons: retrieving native poetics’. While it may be most appreciated by readers familiar with Malay literature, Salleh’s essay will also be of special interest to those who translate poetry from other languages. The concept of language called patut, conveying the meaning ‘suitable’, ‘appropriate’ and ‘fitting’, is described and exemplified in several poems which are presented in Malay and in English translation. Salleh concludes that beautiful language and graceful metaphors remain important elements in the definition of excellent Malay literature. There is an interesting point of comparison between the Cambodian point of view on ‘originality’, described by Chigas, and Salleh’s remark that in traditional Malay literature, ‘the modern concept of plagiarism did not exist. Things were to be shared, taken, improved...[and] the writer often asks for forgiveness for his faults and begs the reader to improve upon [his work]’ (p. 252).

David Smyth begins his essay on Thai literature with a telling remark: ‘For decades... Thais have compared their novels unfavourably with foreign novels; indeed, even today to boast “I never read Thai novels” is accepted in some circles as a sign of discerning taste’. Indeed, these are the Thais one sees in international airports with a Booker Prize winning novel tucked under one arm, who would never think of travelling with the latest work by a Thai novelist. Short stories have somewhat more cachet.

Smyth emphasizes the low estate in which modern fiction is held with the fact that many excellent novels written forty or fifty years ago, now considered to be ‘classics’, are out of print, difficult to acquire, and falling apart when one is lucky enough to find them. I can attest to his assertion: I treasure a collection of xerox copies of old Thai novels that I have tracked down in libraries from Bangkok to Berkeley.

Smyth’s essay is perhaps the best available introduction (in English) to
the course of modern Thai literature over the past century, and his analysis of Thai attitudes toward literature, whether ‘wanakhodii’ (respected pre-modern poetic works) or ‘wanakam’ (less respected contemporary, derivative, Western-style fiction) is perceptive, and deft.

This is, in the main, a very fine anthology. I would like to have seen at least one essay dealing with translation as it has affected the idea of ‘canon’ in modern South-East Asian literature. Which authors have been translated into Western languages, by whom, for whom, and why, is a subject of immense importance that is addressed indirectly, at best, in some of the essays. Another under-represented subject—not represented at all, here—is the influence and meaning of television, and of films, most of which are now ‘consumed’ at home, via television, in VCR and DVD form. Reading audiences have never been very large in most South-East Asian countries, and the ubiquitous TV has shrunk that audience even further. ‘Good’ fiction and poetry tends to be read by a predictable, educated slice of society, including writers who faithfully read each other’s work, and award each other literary prizes. Meanwhile, bookshelves in South-East Asia, as elsewhere in the world, are now more likely to be filled with videos and DVD discs than with books.

Scholars today decry the fact that fifty years ago, not one scholarly Thai book on ‘literature’ contained any mention of contemporary works. I wonder whether fifty years from now, researchers will remark, with amazement, that although most of the production and consumption of ‘story-telling’ in South-East Asia, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, occurred via electronic media, it was dismissed as an ephemeral trend, beneath the notice of scholars.

SUSAN KEPNER

AFRICA

LUDEWIG FERDINAND RØMER:
A reliable account of the Coast of Guinea, 1760.
(Translated and edited by Selena Axelrod Winsnes.) xxx, 290 pp.

Between 1739 and 1749 Ludewig Ferdinand Rømer worked for the Danish West India and Guinea Company; for much of that time he lived on the Gold Coast. Despite being employed by the Danes, he was a north German by birth. Not especially well-educated nor well-read, he nonetheless seems to have had English, French, Latin and Dutch as well as his birth and adopted tongues; the imperatives of trade also pressed him to go on to learn some Portuguese, Gà and Twi. His intellectual narrowness has the virtue of ensuring that his work, unlike so much of the pre-modern literature on this coast, is not much influenced by and still less copied from the texts of others. Following this extended period on the coast, he returned to Copenhagen where he remained a trader and also succeeded as the owner of a large sugar refinery.

He was obviously knowledgeable about West African trade and was keen to share this knowledge, along with extremely partisan views about the conduct of the trade, with a wider public. In 1756 he wrote a 64-page booklet
on the subject with a long eighteenth-century title which is almost as long as
the text. Four years later he published a much longer (386 pp.) work. Selena
Winsnes has translated and edited a conflated edition of both of these works,
neither of which has previously been translated into English in its entirety.

As might be expected in a work whose intention was largely that of self-
interested special pleading, a fair amount of Rømer’s account is devoted to a
critical description of the management of the trade. While this has considerable
interest, his own bias clearly informs the disparaging remarks he makes about
the mercantile interests of some of the other European powers on the West
African coast, even if he seems to have regarded the English as almost saintly.
Most modern readers will instead cherish the informed observations of this
unusually long-term resident on the coast; few of the sadly small group of
pre-modern writers on West Africa had spent so long in situ. Intriguingly
Rømer’s knowledge straddled both Gâ (he was based in Christiansborg
Castle) and Twi-speaking zones. He was not a remote observer but was almost
certainly married into an important Gâ family with whom he maintained a
strong relationship after his final return to Copenhagen in 1749.

To some extent his intimacy with Gâ society, and especially with a
powerful spiritual and temporal figure from Accra, prompts the thought that
some of Rømer’s ethnographic observations are, like so many ethnographic
observations about pre-literate peoples, in reality the descriptions and
explanations of his informants. This, Winsnes suggests, accounts for the
unusual depth and frequency of Rømer’s writings on African cosmology and
history; whether these also have the virtue of accuracy is, of course, another
matter. The fact that some of his observations are to be found in subsequent
accounts and even in oral accounts might owe more to his abiding influence
on these sources than to his acuity.

Winsnes has produced a very readable translation of these useful texts and
has again provided her readers with valuable editorial guidance throughout.
As with so many other volumes in the British Academy’s *Fontes Historiae
Africanae*, including Winsnes’ fine edition of Paul Issert’s letters (1992), this is
a very scholarly and beautifully produced edition for which scholars of this
and subsequent generations have much to be grateful.

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**JOHN MACK (ed.):**

*Africa: arts and cultures.*


Amongst London’s most successful millennium projects is the renovation of
the British Museum (BM), wherein the Great Court complex, like its
counterpart the Tate Modern, has extended and invigorated opportunities to
experience the visual arts. Probably the most challenging venue is the
Sainsbury African Galleries (SAG) with their special suite of spaces to display
objects by ‘Africans’ selected from the BM’s vast ethnographic holdings,
numbering 200,000 items. For about thirty years these had been housed in the
Museum of Mankind and were presented by particular aspects of expressive
culture (*BSOAS* IV, 1992, Part 2).
Relocation to Bloomsbury—for a vastly enlarged audience (up 95 per cent) and into the SAG’s spatial configuration with the entrance midway between two wings—energized a timely reconsideration of African art. In terms of taking on an entire Africa and a contemporary Africa, this was already underway through the BM’s extensive involvement in the africa95 season, particularly by the now Senior Keeper John Mack, whose expertise is the western Indian Ocean (and eastern Africa), and the Curator for West Africa, Nigel Barley. They were joined in the setting out of *Africa: arts and cultures* by another anthropologist Julie Hudson, Curator for North Africa, and artist Chris Spring, former Curator for North Africa, now in charge of the SAG.

Their co-authored volume is more of a companion text than a guide to the new installation of 600 objects. These are organized by medium (such as forged metalwork, wood carving and ceramics) and by topic (such as contemporary art, power objects and masquerade) but neither by nation nor ethnicity, though with the provocative exception of the Royal Benin brass and ivory masterpieces. The introductory entry features a highly contrastive group of modern works in differing media with each projecting its own regional sensibility. These works exemplify the themes of diversity and contemporaneity; they ‘dispel perceived divisions between traditional and modern and emphasise the continuing dynamism of African art’ (Prospectus, 07.00). Throughout the SAG, objects are presented as works of gallery art regardless of their original function. This avowedly aesthetic arrangement has extensive descriptive labels often with photographs and, in five locations, with videos. Historical relationships are revealed through the positioning of displays which suggest links and overlapping features like those between masquerade, personal adornment and textiles. Another example is the apperception of formal and social relationships in ceramics, initiated by Madgalene Odundo’s contemplative *Untitled*, an asymmetrical, unglazed vessel, expanded with a massive assemblage of large domestic pottery and then refined by close resonance with the prestige ceramics of the Mangbetu and Buganda, for which Odundo penned an essay (pp. 212–14). For months, *Time Out’s* Art listings have recommended ‘Sainsbury African Galleries: this is museum display at its imaginative best’.

While the reception of *Africa: arts and cultures* has been less remarkable than that of the SAG, the book represents a considerable achievement: a handy volume in both in size and message which consolidates recent trends in African art studies. It is arranged by four cultural-geographical regions. North-Northeast-Sahara; West; Central; and East and Southern Africa. This approach redresses the prevailing imbalance where the focus is fixed on works from west and central Africa (e.g. the scope of *Re-visions: new perspectives on the African collections of the Horniman Museum*, London, 2000 comprises exclusively west and central Africa and the Yoruba diaspora, and omits holdings from eastern and southern Africa). Mack’s introduction to *Africa: arts and cultures* locates the BM book squarely in the ethnographic collection ‘... of unrivalled human ingenuity and achievement on the African continent’ stating an aim ‘to open up a new gateway into a collection that can be mined in very many ways to show something of the African varieties of life and thought’ (p. 16). Attention is drawn to the complexity of the ‘whole contemporary field’ (p. 23).

Each regional section comprises a summative essay, by a BM curator, which outlines a region’s cultural history with samples of key art practices. These are supplemented by descriptions for fifty-six exemplar objects (around
10 per cent of those displayed) which are written from different viewpoints by artists, anthropologists, historians and curators. How encouraging that about two-thirds of the authors are either from Africa or are overseas Africans. These short essays are the book’s distinguishing feature; the range of authorial voices offers fresh insights with clarity and vibrance. There are two versions of the BM’s efforts to construct a broad overview that encompasses the diverse artistic practices of the entire African continent from many historical periods.

Given the book’s advantages: it is topical, portable, readable and contains fine reproductions, it is a shame that its major drawback is its design. The layout interferes with smooth reading, in that the regional narratives, averaging 45 pages, are interspersed with up to thirteen object descriptions. Further, it is difficult to tell the difference between narrative and these descriptions since the page tint is too subtle. One example of this is the confusion, indeed dissonance, I felt in reading the ‘East and southern Africa’ section. The regional narrative relates the distribution of Bantu-speaking peoples in the first-century A.D. with reference to their creation of the unusual Lydenburg heads, not illustrated so I was visualizing one (and laterally other antique terracotta heads); then, on turning the page, my thoughts were interrupted firstly by a large fearsome image of a generic Makonde initiation mask, secondly by a smaller image pertaining to Kikuyu-Maasai wooden ornaments and thirdly by three pages of explanatory text for these initiation objects, before continuing with the region’s overview. Any reprints or new editions would benefit from situating the object essays together by region. One other concern is the lack of attention to major issues that are clearly problematic to the BM. Of particular significance is the omission of the basic facts about the acquisition of the Benin objects and the current debate about their ownership. These could have been provided, possibly in cameo, like the object essays (e.g. M. Hall, African Archaeology, 1996).

Certainly, Africa: arts and cultures can serve as the point of departure for introductory teaching about African art; and is the required text on a foundation art history course I teach. But, even for a general audience, the information level in the regional essays is lean, sometimes partial and in need of augmentation, some of which is provided in the object essays. Furthermore, despite all the claims for a contemporary outlook, most of the references predate 1990. On the plus side, the parallel texts make feasible a variety of internal analyses within the book; obvious units of analysis are region, local culture, object, time, discipline, medium and display. Lecturers with access to the BM can explore the assumptions of the text directly: are the objects (indeed is art) best served by the SAG’s thematic arrangement or by the text’s regional approach?

Africa’s dual homecoming at the BM is registered by major achievements. These are the construction of an artistic overview for an entire Africa, contemporary expression with dynamic traditions, plural modernities and the possibility of interpretation by reflexive anthropology with regard to the artist, his/her culture and ourselves. Mack and his colleagues have developed a holistic model for the study of African art which needs assessment in order to reckon the efficacy of a regional approach and a general theory of diversity. Their product, despite its drawbacks, is currently the best starting point for the arts and cultures of Africa. It offers good value for scholarship and best value for cost at £17 while comparable jointly-authored books cost £50 such as the recent A History of Art in Africa, New York, 2001.

ELSBETH COURT