

## Book Reviews

*The New Cambridge Handbook of Contemporary China.* By COLIN MACKERRAS. [Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. xi + 313 pp. Hard cover ISBN 0-521-78143-4; paperback ISBN 0-521-78674-6.]

This is a completely revised and updated version of the work of the same name published by Mackerras a decade ago. Similar in structure to the earlier work, save that the original's chapter on society and culture has been omitted, it attempts and generally succeeds in bringing the reader abreast of the many developments that have occurred in China during the intervening decade. An opening chapter on chronology proceeds from 1949 to 2000, with individual years subdivided into foreign affairs, domestic political and military events, appointments and dismissals, cultural and social events, births and deaths, and natural disasters. For the many of us who have, in the midst of a research paper, found ourselves unable to remember whether a particular high-ranking visit took place in one year or the next, this is the place to look for a quick answer.

Subsequent chapters cover politics and law, and provide biographical sketches of eminent current leaders. Other chapters present an annotated bibliography of English-language books on China published since 1990, and provide information on foreign relations, the economy, population, the ethnic minorities, and education. There is a gazetteer chapter as well, containing information on the topography, climate, products, history, and places of interest in each province. With the exception of the chapter on the economy, which was prepared by Dr. Kevin Bucknall, all were compiled by Mackerras. The tone is admirably neutral throughout. There are numerous charts and tables, covering subjects as diverse as the number of washing machines divided by urban and rural areas, and numbers of female teachers in tertiary education. A detailed index facilitates finding the information one seeks.

One wishes that the economics chapter had introduced a bit of scepticism about officially-reported growth figures – which is indeed present in Mackerras's discussion of population. Additionally, in light of the past decade of Party and government concerns over the decline in peasants' living standards relative to those of urban areas it is surprising to read that peasants "improved their position vis-à-vis urban workers between 1978 and 1998" (p. 203). With regard to foreign policy, it is disappointing that the cut-off date for a discussion of China's relations with Hong Kong is 1997, though perhaps this is because, properly speaking, the former colony is now part of the People's Republic. Given the importance of the military in the PRC and international concerns with "the rising China threat," the almost complete lack of attention to the People's Liberation Army is curious. Another area that cries out for coverage is that of literature and art.

Of course, should the author wish to include all of the items suggested by well-meaning reviewers in his next edition, the result might be an

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unwieldy multi-volume tome rather than the concise handbook he intended it to be. Meanwhile, Mackerras is to be congratulated for producing a handy reference work that should find a welcome place on many of our bookshelves.

JUNE TEUFEL DREYER

*Chinese Urban Life under Reform: The Changing Social Contract.* By WENFANG TANG and WILLIAM L. PARISH. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 308pp. £15.99. ISBN 0-521-77865-4.]

As state enterprise reform in China gathers pace, this book provides a timely description of urban life between the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the transformations wrought by the emergence of a market economy. The authors, a political scientist and a sociologist, explore two central issues: the systemic consequences of socialist and market social contracts, and the winners and losers in the politics of transition. They do this through a comparison of urban Chinese attitudes and behaviour with both East European socialist states and marketized Taiwan, and a detailed evaluation of how the reforms are affecting specific interest groups. Drawing on a number of social theories, the book's analysis is strengthened by its use of a set of Chinese national social surveys conducted by the Economic System Reform Institute of China (ESRIC) and other data sets.

The book is divided into four parts. The introduction places the urban reforms in the context of a changing social contract, from a socialist contract promising an egalitarian and secure lifestyle to a market contract which trades in job and welfare security for individual opportunities and higher consumption. A comprehensive survey of the historical background to the reforms follows. In part two the authors make a detailed examination of group interests in the reform process. Part three revisits many of these themes through the gender lens, looking in turn at the impact of the reforms on women's outside employment and life within the family. The final part compares and contrasts urban people's attitudes to reform and the new market social contract with people from Taiwan living in a highly marketized society (drawing on social survey data from Taiwan).

A number of conclusions are drawn from such a detailed analysis. The panoply of differences between pre- and post-reform attitudes and behaviour, especially in comparing China with Taiwan, supports Kornai's key assertion that socialist systems had a set of consequences that shaped all areas of life. The authors emphasize the critical importance of the lines of vertical dependency and authoritarianism created by the work unit structure and the new opportunities, life chances and mobility emerging with the return to the market. Their evaluation of group interests in the reform process produces a messy picture in which the traditional distinction between producers and redistributors is too simplistic a model to judge the winners and losers in the transition to the market. Somewhat

surprisingly they conclude that urban women are gaining in terms of education, jobs and income in the early phases of reform.

The book has a number of strengths, in particular the comparison of the Chinese urban reform experience with European socialist states and with Taiwan. The national social surveys provide some finer detail on the attitudes and behaviour of different groups of people during reform. However, their analysis suffers in two main ways. First, there is little discussion of the reliability of the data sets used; the data is taken at face value and not subjected to critical analysis, or possible differing interpretations. Secondly, the time frame used by the authors, using data gathered mostly between 1987 and 1992, seems too short to make any credible claims about the outcomes of the transition to the market social contract. The real impact of state enterprise reform on the urban working population began in 1997, dramatically altering the urban lives in terms of employment, social security and housing. Their optimistic appraisal of women's position, for example, has not been borne out by later studies on women's declining employment opportunities and life chances.

In conclusion, the book is an interesting and comprehensive study of Chinese urban life during reform that can be used as an introduction for both undergraduates and researchers in understanding the complex history and process of market reform. The book's contemporary relevance is limited by its dependence on data that is already nearly ten years old, and by the enormous changes that have occurred since then. This only serves as a reminder to all of us researching contemporary China that unless we publish our work swiftly it will be useful only as an interesting historical document.

LOUISE BEYNON

*New Shanghai: The Rocky Rebirth of China's Legendary City.* By PAMELA YATSKO. [New York: John Wiley, 2001. viii + 298pp. Hard cover ISBN 0-471-84352-0; paperback ISBN 0-471-47915-2.]

As an admitted Shanghai chauvinist, I look forward to reading books dealing with the city where I studied more than two decades ago, particularly ones such as this which promise a rather comprehensive overview of the Shanghai scene at the turn of the millennium. Pamela Yatsko served as *Far Eastern Economic Review* bureau chief there in the mid-to-late 1990s, and obviously knows the city and its people well. She shared, as I did, their frustration throughout the 1980s as they watched cities such as Hong Kong become world economic powers (spearheaded by Shanghainese refugees), and backwaters such as Shenzhen, which barely existed until the 1980s, attract global attention for their explosive growth. And she cannot avoid being struck by the rapidity with which Shanghai rebuilt itself once Beijing gave the green light after Deng Xiaoping's 1992 visit.

The author argues that for all of Shanghai's impressive hardware, it is woefully lacking in the kind of software necessary to make it a truly

global city. The substantive chapters examine different aspects of this hardware/software disjuncture. For instance, in spite of Pudong's glittering skyscrapers, Shanghai's financial sector cannot compete with Shenzhen, to say nothing of Hong Kong or New York. While many foreigners have placed bets on Shanghai's re-emergence as an industrial dynamo, the bureaucracy-dominated business climate poses too many obstacles at present to its becoming the Asia headquarters for multinationals. Research and development, and with it, innovation, have also stagnated. The private sector is minuscule. In terms of cultural life, the action is in Beijing, where many key figures are self-exiled Shanghainese.

Where does the blame lie? A large share must go to Beijing's suffocating grip on what was, before 1949, China's prime industrial, commercial, financial and cultural centre. The nation's leaders, even those who built their careers in Shanghai, are loathe to give the city too much freedom as failure might have devastating consequences for the national economy. Foreigners who have not done their homework are culpable of having unrealistic expectations. But much of the blame lies with Shanghai's leaders and citizens as well. They have an inflated sense of their own talents and a complacent, condescending attitude to the rest of China. Their leaders aim to keep the lid on development in order to win a promotion to the central government. Keeping peace while demonstrators rocked Beijing in 1989, preventing laid-off workers from engaging in disruptive acts, and reining in corruption were and are career boosters. The downside is a deficit of the type of entrepreneurial and cultural risk-takers who populated nasty old Shanghai before the communists liberated it, and who have since congregated elsewhere in search of more hospitable climes.

The way things are going, Shanghai's future will not look like Hong Kong, Taiwan or New York, Yatsko argues, but multinational and government-dominated Singapore. She sees no sign – except possibly for WTO entry – of a move to put the necessary software into place to shake Shanghai out of what she terms its “deep freeze” (p. 293).

She has built a convincing case and I must reluctantly agree with her conclusions. She would have made a stronger argument by citing some of the scholarly work on Shanghai which has appeared in recent years. The evidence in the book seems to come primarily from in-depth interviews with a rather limited number of informants, and lively personal anecdotes, but backed up by little else. In addition to a map or two and an index, the book could have benefited from an organizational chart of the city's Party and state administrative apparatus, and much more on politics. Editing is very careless.

Interspersed among the weightier chapters are some lively discussions of inequality, consumerism and “vices.” The latter provides a titillating guide to Shanghai's revived night life, which, while lacking Beijing's intellectual thrust, does offer a range of raunchy diversions.

THOMAS B. GOLD

*Private Enterprise in China.* By ROSS GARNAUT, LIGANG SONG, YANG YAO and XIAOLU WANG. [Canberra: Asia Pacific Press; and Beijing: Peking University China Center for Social Research, 2001. xii + 152pp. A\$35.00; US\$35.00. ISBN 0-7315-3662-2.]

Is China now reverting to its earlier business traditions? In the last decade, with the so-called “deepening” of the economic reforms in China, the non-state sector, led by a new breed of entrepreneurs too young to have known the pre-liberation days, has come to the fore and grown in size, both absolutely and relatively. The state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and their managers, who had long ruled the roost, are today of decreasing importance, as is the ownership model they personified. The authors of this new publication, a most informative monograph, call it the “third great institutional transformation” coming after the household reform system and the town and village enterprise sector [p.xi]. It is based on a set of surveys launched in 1999 and is thus one of the most recent studies available in print.

The project is also a good example of bilateral collaboration between Australian and Chinese economists. The authors, Professor Ross Garnaut of the Australian National University and colleagues from his department and from Peking University, sponsored by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the State Economic and Trade Commission (SETC), have produced a highly useful study of the emerging private enterprises in China. It will be of interest to all those looking at these sea-changes in the Chinese economy and their consequences.

The team sampled a large number of firms in four Chinese cities, namely Beijing, Wenzhou (Zhejiang province), Shunde (Guangdong province), and Chengdu (Sichuan province), many of which this reviewer knows at first-hand through empirical fieldwork. The Garnaut team initially sent out 2,400 questionnaires, of which 628 firm-level responses were usable. The upshot is a substantial empirical study and it reveals a great deal of evidence for the broad thesis that the authors put forward concerning the third wave of institutional economic change.

The report is divided into ten chapters, dealing with in turn: introduction and objectives, role of private enterprise, sampled firms, market competition, finance, taxation, internal governance, labour and managerial skills, technological challenges and lastly, law and government administrative regulations. The chapters on finance, taxation, internal governance and labour and managerial skills are particularly interesting. The chapter on law is now perhaps superseded somewhat by the most recent policy changes. After which the book suddenly stops with a jolt and there is no further and reflective thinking-through of what all this may mean for the large picture. There is, however, a reasonable balance of space given to each of these topics. There are also some mini case studies, inset into the chapters, citing detail from specific firms from each of the cities.

Unleashed by the reforms, Chinese entrepreneurs – whatever hat they are wearing – are now producing the lion’s share of industrial production and services. “Privatization” is the virtue that dares not speak its name

and so there is what the authors call a “quiet revolution” (p. xiii). Financial and labour markets have sprung up; new wealth and more jobs have been created. But it is not often easy to grasp which of the new firms are which. Many individually-run firms had put on a “red-hat” to avoid ideological bias and governmental straight-jackets in Shunde, for instance (pp. 21ff.). The local government there was one of the first to get rid of this pretence. Some of the new smaller firms had presented themselves as urban collectives or TVEs, but recently medium or large sized, single-owner manager enterprises have sprung up. Some firms have even floated on the stock exchange, whether in Hong Kong or Shenzhen or both (pp. 111ff.). Entry into the WTO will no doubt change matters further.

The authors’ findings are therefore of great importance to those looking at the changing industrial landscape. However, there are some weak points in the study. The main technical criticisms one can make of this otherwise very robust study are not too numerous but one can mention for example the weighting of its sample towards the Beijing cases. The disproportionate number of such firms may skew it vis-à-vis the other cities’ firms. Also the absence of cases in Shanghai may affect the generalizations made about the private sector. There is, additionally, an all too short bibliography provided.

To sum up, Garnaut *et al* have given the industrial “China-watcher” much to ponder with this rather descriptive research report but one awaits a full-blown book on this important topic, using the findings from the field-study and providing much more extended analysis and discussion of the main themes presented.

MALCOLM WARNER

*The Salt Merchants of Tianjin: State-Making and Civil Society in Late Imperial China.* By KWAN MAN BUN. [Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2001. viii + 239 pp. \$42.00. ISBN 0-8248-2275-7.]

Salt merchants, despite their critical role in the traditional Chinese economy, have largely been ignored by historians. Indeed, Ping-ti Ho’s pioneering article on the Yangzhou salt merchants was published nearly 50 years ago. With *The Salt Merchants of Tianjin* – a revision of his 1999 Chinese book – Kwan Man Bun intends to help fill this gap. Kwan’s book, however, is not simply an economic history as his study includes the social and political roles played by Tianjin’s influential salt merchants (whom he calls “merchant princes”) in their construction of a distinct urban culture and identity in late imperial China.

Although scorned as socially inferior, the salt merchants of the Changlu Division (of which Tianjin was the centre) wielded strong influence in society, according to Kwan, because the salt tax was vital to the state’s finances. In exploring the salt merchants’ shrewd business practices, Kwan also illuminates their social and public lives. When the Qing court was weakened by internal rebellions and foreign threats in the



late 19th century, these ambitious men, armed with their growing economic clout, expanded their role by engaging in a number of urban social services, including disaster relief, local education, orphanages, fire fighting, and the militias – services that had long been the domain of officials and the local scholar-gentry. As a result of these social endeavours, Kwan contends, the salt merchants eclipsed the influence of the scholar-gentry. More importantly, they gave rise to a sense of public spirit and created a new urban civic culture. Kwan does not regard this development as a conflict between merchants and state. Rather, the two sides worked together in what Kwan describes as a “symbiotic” relationship to stabilize local society when chaos and uncertainty threatened.

Nonetheless, the late Qing’s political and legal reforms, as well as its new economic programmes, drastically altered the relationship between state and society. As merchants became more active in their pursuit of new industries, demanding a greater voice through newly created channels such as the Chamber of Commerce and local assemblies, the court, itself seeking a more centralized state-building strategy, reasserted its authority. The result was the bankruptcy of several leading salt merchants. Thus the “useful compromises,” to use Kwan’s words, which once united state and merchants, ended abruptly.

Kwan’s book, based on a vast array of readings, to which his copious footnotes and extensive bibliography attest, is cogently argued. He paints a persuasive picture of the complex association between government and salt merchants. His discussion of this powerful group of men is further enriched by a judicious analysis of two leading salt merchant families – the Zhangs and the Zhas. The author meticulously guides the reader through their ostentatious world, their exclusive network of kin marriages, their imposing accumulations of wealth, and their legendary cultural entrepreneurship, as witnessed in their art collections and garden parties.

Despite the book’s many qualities, I have a few minor reservations. Although the author’s attention to merchant culture is commendable, he devotes insufficient discussion to the constant tension between the salt merchants’ aggressive business pursuits and their deeply-rooted desire to win social recognition, not by dominating the market but through success in the civil service examinations.

Further, in some ways the book’s subtitle is a misnomer, for Kwan touches very little on state making. In his discussion of civil society, he rightly demonstrates that Tianjin’s experience was not of a confrontation between state and society in the Habermasian sense, for the relationship between the two was not mutually exclusive. Regrettably, however, he fails to analyse in depth the salt merchants’ increasing political presence in later constitutional and revolutionary movements. Such an analysis would surely have contributed to a more compelling commentary on the relations between the state and the merchants.

CHANG-TAI HUNG

*One Industry, Two Chinas: Silk Filatures and Peasant-Family Production in Wuxi County, 1865–1937.* By LYND A S. BELL. [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. xvii + 290 pp. \$51.00. ISBN 0-8047-2998-0.]

With this book Lynda Bell contributes a major piece to our understanding of China's modern economic history. The core of the book is a detailed description of the evolution of the silk industry in central China between the late 19th century and the mid-20th century. Bell's exhaustively researched analysis covers each level of silk production in Wuxi county, from the rural household producers of cocoons, to the intermediate level cocoon merchants and local filatures, to the major firms that by the early 1930s controlled much of the market through modern, vertically integrated organizations. Bell also describes and analyses the broader context within which the silk market functioned. Her main conclusion is that the combination of the labour-intensive traditional farm economy of the Chang (Yangtze) River delta with a merchant class that was also the local political elite, prevented modernization of the rural labour force and perpetuated the co-existence of poor, non-mechanized cocoon producers with modern filatures and wealthy merchants.

The foundation of Bell's study is primary information gathered during extended research visits to China, including published materials, government documents from the Number Two History Archive in Nanjing, local historical compilations, and interviews with individuals who were involved in the silk industry. She obtained detailed data on rural households from a 1940 survey by the Japanese South Manchurian Railway Company. She managed to locate additional household-level information in a 1927 survey that had been nearly forgotten until she traced it to a vault at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The two rural surveys are described in detail in an appendix, as are the interview techniques and subjects, and data on investment in Wuxi filatures. Throughout the book Bell also supports and compares her analysis with the findings of other scholars in the field, providing thorough and insightful coverage of the secondary literature.

One major focus of the book is the nature of silk production at the household level and the question of why rural families would devote large amounts of labour – primarily female – to an activity that earned terribly low returns. The answer lies in the familiar problem of high population density, which prevented most Wuxi farm families from supporting themselves by agriculture alone from at least the mid-18th century. By the late 19th century, while many men from rural Wuxi families worked in relatively well-paid jobs in commerce or manufacturing, the best option for the women who stayed at home was the small but crucial amount that could be added to meagre family incomes by raising silkworms and cocoons for the expanding world market.

Bell's other major focus is the intricate and constantly evolving role of local elite groups in guiding and managing the growth of the silk industry. The cocoon marketing networks were created by members of



gentry families, who also provided investment funding and managers for the mechanized filatures that made Wuxi a major silk producing centre. In the first two decades of the 20th century, modern-minded reformers from local elite families – many of them women – were instrumental in establishing sericulture schools and research stations. While acting as increasingly modern business leaders, the silk elite continued the long Confucian tradition of working with government to promote local economic growth, thereby also strengthening their own control over the industry. In a fascinating final brief section, Bell shows that a number of leaders in the very capitalist silk industry of the late 1930s continued to be major figures in the industry under the People's Republic, continuing the tradition of elite–government co-operation despite the drastic change in regime.

Specialists in Chinese economic and social history will want to add this book to their personal libraries. It would also serve as excellent material for graduate or advanced undergraduate students because of its comprehensive analysis and Bell's clearly explained utilization of a wide variety of historical sources.

THOMAS R. GOTTSCHANG

*Socialist Welfare in a Market Economy: Social Security Reforms in Guangzhou, China.* By NELSON CHOW and YUEBIN XU. [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001. 145 pp. £37.50. ISBN 0-7546-1699-1.]

This slim volume, sliced into two equal parts, delivers a valuable service to those interested in China's incipient social security system. The first half offers a faithful and detailed recounting of the progressive, if regularly amended, movement of welfare provision (as marketization and lay-offs both proceed apace) away from one based upon disbursement by the firm to one grounded upon societal pooling (a goal far from having yet been met). It begins in 1985, and takes the story up to 1998. The second half focuses in more detail upon the same material for the city of Guangzhou. There is a full account of all the relevant regulations, at both the national and Guangzhou municipal levels, along with some sense of implementation, especially in Guangzhou.

In some ventures, Guangzhou clearly had a head start on reforms not inaugurated nationally until a year or more later. For example, labour reform there started as early as 1977; in the early 1990s contract employment was mandated for all employees experimentally in some firms; allegedly, the entire urban pension system was made uniform by 1993; and there was a measure calling for pensions for contract workers already in 1983. The city also came out with regulations on surplus workers in 1989 – rules that were obviously drawn upon when the national re-employment programme was pioneered in 1994. Some of the rulings – such as disability benefits for non-local workers, and incentives for firms to retain, not just to hire, laid-off workers – if actually practised, would make Guangzhou unusually generous.

Chow and Xu give a frank assessment of the difficulties in the reforms. Into the late 1990s, they are willing to admit, partial coverage and

ineffective enforcement were continuing to plague the realization of a working system even in Guangzhou. Shockingly, they estimate that, as of that point, the annual reserves of all social insurance funds in the city were “insufficient to pay one month’s pensions of all current retirees” (p. 103). And they submit the candid if disquieting judgment that, since the new system has not only to assist surplus and furloughed workers, but also to sustain a quickly mounting number of retirees, reforms of the overall system will be “extremely difficult, if not impossible” (p. 128). At other times (though by no means always) they tend to accept official statistics at face value.

While the book finishes with the positive message that the “reforms have resolved, to a large extent, the problem of enterprise-insurance,” claiming that “workers are now, at least, ensured of some form of payments when they retire, become unemployed or injured” – an assertion belied by frequent reports of worker and retiree protests – there is a serious inconsistency just two pages later. There the authors conclude, “the dismantling of the planned economy has not only created a mounting need for income protection, but has also weakened the apparatus and mechanism of the government for meeting these needs” (p. 129). For as the state-owned sector of the economy – as well as the numbers of those employed in it – steadily contracts, the challenge is to expand the system’s coverage, chiefly in order to enlarge its funding base. The critical problem is that the state cannot command those in charge of the steadily ballooning “non-public” portion of the nation’s economy, and units outside the state’s control are often loath to comply.

The aim of the social security reform has been to relieve the firms from their welfare duties in accord with the larger drive to make enterprises profitable, responsible for their own accounts and separated from the government. But this goal has not yet been met. And given that the income of the insurance funds still largely derives from individual state enterprises, over half of which are now in the red, the authors acknowledge that, “unless drastic measures are made in the near future to extend the social security coverage to include employees in the private sector, the social security system in China will soon come to a dead end” (p. 129).

Despite the wealth of data and the objective appraisals, the authors might have produced a more user-friendly study had they taken up the national and the local case in tandem. One must sometimes go back to the first half to check the extent to which Guangzhou is innovating or simply following orders; it is also not always clear to what extent Guangzhou is doing things differently from other places. There are several typographical errors, a few discrepancies in the statistics, and, in the one instance of *pinyin* in the book, the word for layoffs (*xiagang*) is misspelled. These issues aside, the book should stand as a very solid and informative primer on China’s welfare reforms over a critical period.

DOROTHY J. SOLINGER

*China's Leap into the Information Age: Innovation and Organization in the Computer Industry.* By QIWEN LU. [New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. xxi + 208 pp. £40.00. ISBN 0-19-829537-5.]

Through studies of four representative Chinese companies – Stone, Legend, Founder, and Great Wall – this book presents the development of China's information technology (IT), and that of the computer industry in particular, in the past two decades. It argues that such development has been built on a different technology learning process from the traditional, bottom-up, linear technology transfer approach that starts with importation substitution, followed by assimilation, absorption and localization, product redesign, and finally product design. The Chinese cases in this study indicate that technology learning can start with any of these stages, even with more innovative stages of product redesign and design.

As Lu correctly points out, the four companies could adopt this approach due to their strong connections with the leading institutions of research and learning from which they spun-off: Legend with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Founder with Beijing University, Great Wall with the Ministry of Electronics Industry (MEI), and Stone with CAS, MEI, and other institutions. Although they were humble financially at the outset, they had advantageous access to staffing, facilities and customer channels. More importantly, they were allowed to use the research achievements of these institutions – mainly “public goods” – resulting from investment by the state during the central planning period aimed at better linking research and economy.

When these companies were established in the 1980s, China's computer industry was in its infancy. Stone introduced the first electronic Chinese typewriter with help from scientists at the CAS Computing Centre. Legend started by assembling imported kits into personal computer (PC) units and sold them at a higher price to realize its initial capital accumulation, through which they realized that the lower usability of PCs in China was mainly due to poor Chinese interface. Using technologies from the CAS Institute of Computing Technology, the company developed a Chinese character add-on card, thus positioning it well, technologically and financially. Great Wall enjoyed the benefits of domestic market access, strategic alliance with multinational corporations, and exports through the MEI bureaucracy. Founder was the most technologically advanced and intensive when it was established, because one of its founders, Wang Xuan, a Beijing University professor of computer science, had been involved in a national Chinese language publishing project for more than ten years.

In the process of partnering and competing with foreign multinational corporations, or in the words of Duan Yongji, then Stone's executive, “dancing with the wolf” (*yu lang gong wu*), they have gradually grown into the most important non-government science and technology enterprises. Legend later launched a computer motherboard business, and eventually became China's biggest PC manufacturer, surpassing multinational corporations such as IBM, Compaq and Hewlett Packard to occupy

the largest market share of some 30 per cent in 2001. Founder has dominated the Chinese language electronic publishing market, not only in mainland China, but overseas.

In addition to indigenous technological capability, the book also discusses organizational change in these enterprises. They were among the first of China's high-tech enterprises to be listed on Hong Kong's or China's stock exchanges to raise funds for further development. Most recently, through management buy-out, Stone started to solve the ownership problem that had long hovered over this collectively owned company.

Market demand has shielded China from exposure to the international economic cycle to a certain extent, while indigenous technology has helped China's computer companies succeed initially in technology learning and innovation. But further development of China's IT industry, which has been viewed as an answer to China's economic woes, depends upon more technological push. Since most of China's high-tech enterprises do not possess independent intellectual property rights in critical technologies, the profit margin of their products has been slim. Located at the bottom of the high-tech "food chain," any change in the upper stream, such as standards, specifications, designs and so on, has had serious impact on these companies. Management therefore has a feeling of crisis in China's post-WTO entrance competitive environment. It is a matter of survival, not choice, for these enterprises to upgrade their technologies and products on their own. But if they invest a larger per cent of sales revenue in research and development, their accounting books will show deficit. The companies also face challenges from multinational corporations that have established their research and development presence in China, attracting the most talented researchers with lucrative benefit packages and promising career paths. This post-1999 development of China's IT industry is at least as interesting as that described in Lu's book.

Through conducting in-depth interviews, searching company archives and internal documents (a privilege Lu enjoyed because he formerly worked in Stone and was well-connected in the Zhongguancun area where these companies are located), and using secondary reports, the book presents a detailed, albeit sometimes too meticulous, history of how these companies and China's computer industry have evolved. It is a must read for those who are interested in technological development and accompanying institutional change during China's reform era, as well as those scholars and practitioners of technological advancement in developing countries.

CONG CAO

*Guojia xinxi anquan baogao [Report on National Information Security].*

Compiled by ZHANG CHUNJIANG and NI JIANMIN, with a foreword by WU JICHUAN. [Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2000. 307 pp. ISBN 7-01-003209-2.]

Any source that provides insights into the view of the world from the Ministry of Information Industries (MII) is particularly valuable at a time

when debate is raging over the political impact of the Internet in the PRC. This is even more so as China joins the WTO, after which domestic Internet firms will have to gain approval from the MII before they can receive foreign capital, co-operate with foreign businesses or list domestic or overseas stocks. The *Report on National Information Security*, compiled under the direction of Zhang Chunjiang, deputy minister of the MII, and Ni Jianmin, deputy director of the political section of the Central Party Policy Research Bureau, with a foreword by Wu Jichuan, the Minister himself, is thus most welcome.

Since his appointment, Wu Jichuan has drawn the attention of foreign commentators largely due to what is seen as his hard-line stance on issues that affect national security, especially those related to the access of foreign operators and investors to the telecoms sector. In his foreword, Wu confirms the trepidation with which he views the daily increase in the use of the Internet for ideological and cultural penetration, and for “illegal and immoral activities” that threaten the sovereignty, security and social stability of all states. The authors of the MII report are particularly concerned about views expressed by American policy-makers regarding the ability of the global information infrastructure to transform societies and make them more democratic.

The authors of the report acknowledge that China has to link into the Internet if it is to reap its economic benefits. Yet they are also very open about the vulnerability of their country due to the technological lead enjoyed by advanced states, which results in a dangerous, and for now unavoidable, degree of dependency on foreign technology. They expect some strong Western states to use this lead to obtain advantages that they cannot gain through military means, as part of their strategy to curtail the development of the PRC by exploiting its resources, breaking down its culture, and attacking its political, military and economic life. This includes the use of e-mail and electronic newspapers for the waging of psychological warfare, the wreaking of destruction through leaving Trojan horses and viruses in software, and carrying out unwarranted surveillance by creating “back doors” in hardware.

Perhaps the most intriguing part of the work is a conscious attempt to bring Mao’s theory of the three worlds – superpowers, developed states and developing states – into the information age. Now the world consists of the “Information Hegemony State,” “Information Sovereign States” and “Information Colonial and Semi-Colonial States.” The top dog in this information order is able to assert control over others through its ability to dominate telecommunications hegemony, software hegemony, and to reap profits from information and the Internet. Those in the middle, mainly the advanced European states, can retain some command over information, while those at the bottom of the pile have no choice but to accept information forced on them by other states, and are open to exploitation because they lack the means to protect themselves from hegemony.

If China is to escape the fate of being an “Information Colonial and Semi-Colonial State,” it has to build defences against information hege-

mony through international co-operation and domestic policies, working with other states to stand up for its own interests and those of the developing world. The overall result is a kind of 'virtual realism,' in which the survival of the state and its ability to take initiatives in the struggle for development depends on the preservation of "information borders." Such "borders" are "not defined by territory, space and seas, but by the scope of politically influential information." Whether or not a state can survive in the information age depends on the security of its "information borders," whether it can consolidate and expand its "information territory" and construct strong "spiritual defences."

The domestic policies recommended for ensuring China's security in the information age, and approved of by Wu Jichuan in his introduction, include strengthening the state's ability to manage information security through better co-ordination of the various organizations and laws, both domestically and in harmony with the practices of international society. A proper sense of responsibility has to be instilled in Internet users so that they will install and develop the right kinds of systems for ensuring security. Moreover, professional support structures are to be developed in the shape of enterprises dedicated to computer security, acting as 'Internet police' and 'Internet clinics.' Research and development of core technologies is also to be strengthened. Finally, more attention is to be paid to raising an awareness of information security amongst personnel and throughout society as a whole.

Aside from these visions of the thinking that goes on inside the MII, the book is quite useful for reference purposes in the way that it traces the development of Internet regulation and the organizations that have to implement it. It is also important to understand how much of this has been taken from examples of 'good practice' in the liberal democracies. Although much of the information concerning the ways in which the state tries to control the spread and usage of information technology may not be particularly new to those who closely follow such developments, it is certainly interesting to hear the story from the horse's mouth.

CHRISTOPHER R. HUGHES

*China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950–1975.* By QIANG ZHAI. [Chapel Hill, NC and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. £14.95. 304 pp. ISBN 0-8078-4842-5.]

This is a pathbreaking, in-depth account of China's role in Vietnam's wars against France and the United States. It is a meticulously documented, carefully balanced, and well-written work, which will stand for some time as the definitive work on the subject. Zhai draws on wide range of Chinese sources made available during the 1980s and 1990s. These include documents Zhai personally collected at the Jiangsu provincial archives, including reports on Vietnam conveyed to Jiangsu by the



Foreign Affairs Office of the State Council at annual conferences between 1958 and 1966. Zhai also draws on the full breadth of existing secondary English language literature on the Vietnam war. A 26-page bibliography is testament to the breadth and depth of Zhai's resource base.

Zhai addresses many of the questions that have concerned scholars for years. Among Zhai's conclusions are the following. Chinese support for the Vietnamese revolutionary war began early and continued through the 1975 fall of Saigon, was large-scale and probably decisive, and derived from an inter-woven combination of ideological solidarity and pragmatic power calculations. China, fearing "another Korean war" with the United States if fighting in Vietnam continued, played a crucial role in pressuring Hanoi to accept the de facto partition of Vietnam during the Geneva conference of 1954. There were deep linkages between Mao's efforts to radicalize China's domestic politics and his support for North Vietnam's anti-US war in the early and mid-1960s. There were chronic disputes between Hanoi and Beijing over the status of Laos and Cambodia. China's rapprochement with the United States in the early 1970s created deep resentment in Hanoi, which Beijing tried to placate by major increases in material assistance. On the issue of how close China and the United States came to a direct war over Vietnam in the mid-1960s, Zhai concludes that the *casus belli* would have been a US or a US-supported South Vietnamese invasion of North Vietnam. People who have followed the historiography of the Vietnam war over the years – much of which was contributed by Zhai – will find little surprising in Zhai's account in this book. Yet, someone looking for a single, concise, highly readable, factually rich, and evenly argued account for use by people not familiar with this terrain, will do no better than point them towards Zhai's work. *China and the Vietnam Wars* should be included in every university library.

JOHN GARVER

*Across the Himalayan Gap: An Indian Quest for Understanding China.*

Edited by TAN CHUNG. [New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and Gyan Publishing House, 1998. ISBN 81-212-0585-9.]

This is a fascinating book essential for anyone seeking to understand contemporary China–India relations. It presents in considerable detail and from a number of different perspectives the strategic vision of a coalition of China and India struggling in common to create a new world economic–political order in greater comport with the interests and values of the peoples of the non-Western world. This vision of Sino-Indian co-operation in building a new world order was posited as the desirable end-goal of the process of Sino-Indian rapprochement presided over by Indian Congress Party and Chinese leaders beginning in 1988. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's speech at Qinghua University in December 1988, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's speech at Beijing University in

September 1993, and Vice President K.R. Narayanan's speech at Fudan University in October 1994 are presented at the beginning of the volume as authoritative endorsements of this strategic vision. The volume includes several essays that take a more jaundiced view of Sino-Indian relations, but by and large the volume makes the case for Sino-Indian co-operation to right the wrongs of the world.

Although the volume covers only the Indian side of the equation, Chinese leaders also lauded the goal of a Sino-Indian partnership in constructing a new world order. Both Congress Party and Chinese Communist Party leaders posited as the desirable goal of Sino-Indian rapprochement the recreation of close co-operation such as existed in the mid-1950s on issues such as decolonialization, and the role in world affairs of the Western alliance on the one hand, and the Afro-Asian world on the other. Under the BJP, Indian policy began to take a different direction, and understanding the starting point is essential for understanding the BJP's new departure.

The central idea in this vision of Sino-Indian co-operation is that the existing international political-economic order was set up by rapacious imperialist countries of the West, founded on the selfish, materialistic values of the West, and serves to maintain the economic exploitation and political domination of the Western countries. The world is rapidly changing, however, and the once-oppressed peoples of Asia have risen, and will/should co-operate to change the existing set up. Exactly what sort of changes are prescribed for the world order is never quite clarified. But the implicit preference seems to be for greater state control of economics in the capacity of global redistribution of wealth, and diminution of the Western and US role in world affairs. A sub-theme developed by many essays in the volume is that there are deep civilizational similarities between India and China that distinguish them both from Western civilization and offer humanity a solution to the ills wrought by Western civilization. The volume is also an effort to free Indian Sinology from the pernicious effect of dependence on Western, and especially US, Sinology. As Tan Chung explains in his introduction: "Experience shows that apart from bias and prejudice (which have always been more developed in the developed world and stronger in the strong Western powers than in other countries and areas), it has been disadvantageous to look at Chinese developments from the Western cultural viewpoints than from the Indian." In other words, theories of conflict and antagonism developed by Western Sinology serve Western, not Indian, strategic interests.

The vision of China-India co-operation is traced to the great Indian-Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore, of course, was one of the pivotal figures in the creation of modern Indian national consciousness. He was also much enamoured of Chinese civilization. After following and commenting on Chinese developments for many years, he visited China in 1924 to give a series of talks (excerpts of which are also presented in the volume). The reception Tagore received is fascinating, not too welcoming as Tagore's spiritualism was deemed threatening by

the CCP and other “progressives,” and well told here by Sisir Kumar Das. Tagore saw a common spiritual–idealistic essence in both Chinese and Indian civilization which could provide a vital and necessary antidote to the greedy materialism of Western civilization. Nehru’s vision of Indian–Chinese co-operation in the 1950s was similar to Tagore’s, and various comments by Nehru on that co-operation are presented in the volume. Anyone looking for a good synopsis of Nehru’s foreign policies with a focus on China can do no better than turn to Giri Deshingkar’s perceptive essay on that topic here. The book also includes useful commentaries by former Indian China hands, including an account by Brajesh Mishra of Mao’s famous smile and greeting atop Tiananmen Gate on 1 May 1970.

JOHN GARVER

*China’s Dilemma: The Taiwan Issue.* By SHENG LIJUN. [Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2001. 239 pp. ISBN 981-230-076-7.]

Sheng Lijun argues that “China’s Dilemma” is that while Beijing “wants to concentrate its energy and resources on modernization” and “deal with the Taiwan issue at a later stage” (p. 3), the “assertiveness of Taiwan” since 1995 has complicated such a strategy. On the one hand, the mainland must respond to the island’s provocative behaviour lest the island move towards independence, while on the other it must temper its response so that the goal of economic development (with international support) is not jeopardized.

In Sheng’s view, the solution which the leaders of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) have reached is to limit policy toward Taiwan to one of simply deterring independence by concentrating efforts on improving relations with the United States. Such efforts, it is hoped, will result in Washington’s realization of the importance of “a co-operative relationship with China for its long-term global and regional interests” and thus lessen American support for gestures by Taiwan that would upset the status quo, force a response by Beijing, and derail the nation’s efforts at economic modernization (pp. 194–96 and 223).

Drawing for the most part on regional newspaper reports, the author traces the evolution of this dilemma from its origins in 1995, when Lee Teng-hui was granted a visa to visit the United States, to the articulation of the “two states theory” in the second half of 1999. This discussion of developments during these four years is the most valuable part of the book. Sheng presents an extremely useful chronicle of the major developments in cross-strait relations. Moreover, because he sees American policy as a crucial variable shaping the nature of these relations, he presents useful and informative sections on both the substance and impact of Washington’s policy in the area.

However, the discussion is not without its flaws. In developing his argument regarding Sino-American relations Sheng does not sufficiently capture the ambivalence with which each side views the other. Rather, his

emphasis is on the prevalence of the “China threat” view in the United States and of the drive for co-operation with Washington by leaders in the PRC (chapters 3 and 4). Most importantly, the force of the author’s argument is diminished by the organizational nature and coverage of the book. One has the impression that much of this book is based on previously written papers with resultant repetitions, uneven coverage of events, and some loss of coherence in the argument. Most importantly, although the book’s narrative extends to 1999, most of the discussion seems focused on the confrontation of 1995–96 and its consequences.

This limited coverage for a book published in 2001 seriously detracts from its usefulness as a guide to the current situation in US–Taiwan–PRC relations. Chen Shui-bian’s election as president and the subsequent realignment of politics in Taiwan has radically changed the dynamics in the strait. Moreover, the author’s argument (pp. 223–24) that the mainland will place less emphasis on economic co-operation as a means for reunification has been belied by the events of the last two years. Still, this book remains a useful guide for readers seeking an introduction to the events of 1995–99.

STEVEN M. GOLDSTEIN

*Portraits of “Primitives”: Ordering Human Kinds in the Chinese Nation.*

By SUSAN D. BLUM. [Oxford: Roman & Littlefield, 2001. 234 pp. £18.95. ISBN 0-7425-0092-6.]

Susan Blum’s book on Han Chinese attitudes toward, and stereotypes of, “minority nationalities” (*shaoshu minzu*) in China reads like a story we’ve heard many times in bits and pieces but never in its entirety. For those of us who work in China, particularly in regions where *shaoshu minzu* predominate, *Portraits of “Primitives”* tells a story with which we are in various ways familiar, but which has never yet been told with such clarity and thoroughness. The book seeks to offer a “preliminary sketch” of China’s minorities through Han eyes, and after exploring cognitive prototypes of ethnic identity and summarizing the key attributes of such prototypes in China, Blum offers brief “portraits” of seven minority groups (Dai, Wa, Zang, Yi, Hui, Naxi, and Bai) as constructed and viewed by her Han informants. But Blum’s book is more than a retracing of the familiar narrative of how knowledge constructed about minorities has served Han attitudes of superiority and civilization. Blum instead adopts a clearly sympathetic tone toward the Han, arguing that there is nothing inherently sinister about humans’ cognitive disposition to differentiate others with exaggerated prototypes of identity. Many studies by non-PRC scholars of ethnicity in China have offered critical appraisals of state policy towards ethnic groups, the politics of ethnic boundaries and identities, minority subjectivity, and the processes of subjection inherent in minority cultural production. Much of this work rests on many assumptions about popular attitudes toward minorities in China, but Blum’s book is the first to explicitly question and attempt a rigorous and

systematic analysis of how the majority, the Han, understand ethnicity in China.

As a linguistic anthropologist, Blum begins her thesis with the argument that language is all about difference, and like language, social and cultural categories require contrasts that make them comprehensible. Differences thus get exaggerated into what we typically think of as “social stereotypes.” In some ways, Han perspectives on ethnicity in China reveal many of the “universal” patterns of cognition with which we are all familiar. Thus, Blum introduces a dimension often overlooked in much Western scholarship on China’s minorities. The tendency to see in China a special case of state approaches to managing ethnic diversity is tempered by Blum’s careful analysis of the very mundane (and universal) cognitive processes at work in shaping Chinese attitudes toward minorities. Blum argues, then, that many Chinese attitudes are true of human cognition in general: “Hence the Chinese way of conceptualizing ethnicity, with its concomitant excesses and oddities, can be explained largely even before we consider the role played by political factors, without having to attribute conspiracies to groups in power” (p. 51). Blum does not get much closer than this to explicitly criticizing Western scholarship that tends to adopt variations of a Foucauldian power/knowledge perspective on Chinese minorities. She is careful to leave the broader implications of her argument to the reader. But the implications are very important, and if there is an aspect of this very well-constructed study to criticize, it is that Blum does not make her implicit criticism of Western scholarship more explicit. But Blum is also careful not to simply assert that “the Han are just like the rest of us.” She also points out the historical and geographical specificities that have shaped Chinese attitudes towards minorities in particular ways. Thus, there is an intriguing discussion of how “Hanness” is similar and yet very different from “Whiteness” in the US. Blum also discusses how concepts such as “self” and “identity” are understood very differently in China than in “the West.” Much of the clarity of these discussions stems from Blum’s precise focus on language itself, more than broader social patterns.

The study is based on fieldwork carried out in Kunming. Blum’s methods focused on revealing the role of language in shaping “cognitive prototypes” of ethnic identity, including interviews, student essays, analysis of articles and photographs from popular press as well as Chinese scholarship on minorities; participant observation; and innovative “linguistic identification and evaluation tests” (Blum’s own variant of Lambert’s “matched guise test”). It’s an honest book. Blum does not claim to offer more than her methods and sources of information can clearly provide. She carefully links her claims to precise observations, interviews, linguistic tests, student essays, and other experiences. The reader feels confident in her analysis because she asks us to make no leaps of faith. Thus, in addition to her theoretical claims about identity, Blum’s book would be useful as a graduate methods text because it offers one of the clearest handbooks for methodologically tackling the thorny

questions about identity that seem insurmountable to those just starting research projects on ethnicity and identity.

Yet Blum's unwillingness to push her argument beyond where it may confidently go perhaps diminishes somewhat the full force that her study should have on the field of Chinese ethnic scholarship. This is hardly a damning criticism, however, as the book's modesty is frankly refreshing. It strikes this reader as one of a rare breed of studies of China that bridges an often vast theoretical chasm that separates Chinese and Western understandings about China. For this reason, I hope that there are plans for a Chinese translation, as *Portraits of "Primitives"* is a book that should have an important impact in China as well.

TIM OAKES

*Chinatown and Transnationalism: Ethnic Chinese in Europe and Southeast Asia.* By GREGOR BENTON and EDMUND TERENCE GOMEZ. [Canberra: Australian National University, 2001. 40 pp. ISBN 0-909524-44-0.]

This occasional paper is a revised version of a paper presented in February 2000 at a symposium on "The Chinese transnational communities" and the first result of a wider research project currently being developed by Gregor Benton and Edmund Terence Gomez. In this succinct comparative study, the authors analyse the topic of transnationalism within the Chinese communities of the UK and South-East Asia, focusing on two main aspects: business style and political consciousness.

The key point of this analysis is that it does not set out to reinforce the myths of the "pull of the homeland" nor the key role of the networks in overseas Chinese economic success. In fact, it does the very opposite.

Based upon their field research and other relevant works, the authors try to demonstrate that networks have not played a key role in overseas Chinese economic success, and that the ties to the ancestral homeland have become weaker and weaker with successive generations, causing changes in identity consciousness and considerably reducing cohesion in the transnational community: "(...) as the Chinese communities in both Britain and SE Asia gained in generational depth (...) central institutions of the Confucian ethic started to decline."

The authors also argue that the identity of overseas Chinese is by no means a fixed asset. Instead, it is a process of ebbs and flows to the rhythm of an evolving historical and political framework and reconfigurations conditioned by political and economic changes. In addition they pointed out that there has been a gradual redefinition of loyalties among overseas Chinese towards host countries which further undermined their cohesion as a transnational community.

The authors' conclusion is that in spite of the enormous differences existing between these two overseas Chinese communities, either looking at them within the historical and political framework or examining them



from the demographic and economic perspectives, it is still possible to identify in both the trend for internal disintegration and steady assimilation with the local host societies, albeit at different paces. I would recommend this concise study to anyone interested in studies of overseas Chinese.

Although it may cause strong criticism among scholars in this field, I consider this study a valuable contribution to the literature not only because it is a comparative study but mainly because it depicts a thesis diverse to the current mainstream on overseas Chinese studies.

ANA CRISTINA DIAS ALVES

*Legacies of the Comfort Women of World War II.* Edited by MARGARET D. STETZ and BONNIE B. C. OH. [Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2001. 230 + xvi pp. Hard cover ISBN 0-7656-0543-0; paperback ISBN 0-7656-0544-9.]

Accounts of the comfort women, including this one, suggest that up to 200,000 women were involved. Women were designated as without value. They lost all claim on their bodies, which were confiscated as war matériel. They became sexual slaves, raped, for the Japanese imperial army. Many died at the front line, or were murdered for sport or to ensure nobody would live to tell the tale. Penniless, displaced and dispossessed, many of those who survived could never return home. Few married, and few could have children. These comfort women, named after the Japanese term *ianfu*, served in military brothels in China, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and elsewhere before and during the Second World War. According to most accounts, the majority of the women were Koreans (though here a footnote leaves this undecided), typically teenagers. They were taken from families, schools, and friends either by force or with the promise of work in factories or for Japanese families. In Korea, the term *chongshindae* is preferred, “volunteer corps.”

Personal stories have become known since the early 1990s but, to date, less than 300 survivors have been identified. Since the first Korean came forward in 1991, a number of publications have appeared (for example, by George Hicks (1994); Keith Howard, ed. (1995); Shin Young-sook and Cho Hye-ran (1996); Chungmoo Choi, ed. (1997); Dai Sil Kim-Gibson (1999)). In North Korea, interviews infused with state ideology have been published as *Downtrod Women's Cry: Indictment against Japanese Imperialists' War Crimes* (Pyongyang: Committee on Measures for Compensation to Former Korean Comfort Women for Japanese Army and Pacific War Victims, 1995). In fact, the story began to emerge back in 1962, when Senda Kako, a journalist for the *Mainichi shimbun*, was researching war materials and uncovered a censored photograph of two women wading the Huang River. He was told they were “P” women, vulgar slang for comfort women. The first testimony, under the pseudonym Kim

Chonja, appeared in 1965, and in 1969 Ito Keiichi published the regulations of a Shanghai “comfort station.”

This volume takes the discussion forwards, challenging concepts of imperialism, militarism, sexism, class, and race, assembling a set of chapters by Korean, Japanese, Australian and American scholars of Asian history, Asian politics, feminist theory, and human rights, juxtaposing these with papers by documentary film makers, visual artists, and a novelist. The comfort women story is painted with a broad brush, creating an assemblage rather than a detailed historical account. This is intentional, for if the “comfort stations” themselves have become increasingly visible over the last decade, then there must be lessons we can draw for today and for the future.

The volume divides into three parts. The first sets the context. Here we have the detailed story, except that since much of it has been told elsewhere, the chapters create something of a patchwork quilt. The first chapter, by Bonnie Oh, focuses in on Korea, describing the system and recounting how the story rose to prominence in the 1990s. Two chapters explore how prostitution is represented in Japanese art, institutionalizing and rationalizing the practice (Linda Gertner Zatlín), and how “comfort stations” operated in the occupied Dutch East Indies (Yuki Tanaka). Chunghee Sarah Soh then looks more closely at the politics of representing comfort women, exploring how agitation initiated by the Korean feminist movement led to the appointment of special rapporteurs at the UNHCR.

A second part of the volume contains position papers. Stetz broadens the debate, with the observation that although rape and prostitution has characterized military campaigns it should not be allowed to continue. Grant Goodman repudiates Japanese denials of the whole system with his own detective story. He examines a document he had saved in 1945, when assigned to the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section at MacArthur’s headquarters in the Philippines. This includes detailed information about the comfort system as it was operating. We read how he passed the document on to a Japanese journalist, and what happened when it was published. Three chapters point fingers and call for redress, treating sexual slavery as a war crime (by Pamela Thoma, Dongwoo Lee Hahm, and John Y. Lee).

The final chapters move away from scholarship, foregrounding artistic responses. Two short illustrated chapters examine installations and mixed media works by Tomiyama Taeko and Mona Higuchi. The Korean-American cellist Therese Park briefly tells the story of her 1997 novel, *A Gift of the Emperor*. And two longer accounts describe documentary films. The first film, by Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, I have reviewed somewhat critically elsewhere (*Korean Studies Review*, 14 September 2000); here Kim-Gibson tells part of her own life story, and the difficulties she had interviewing and filming surviving comfort women. The second, *In the Name of the Emperor* by Christine Choi, explores the Nanjing massacre, and in the telling intersects with accounts of forced prostitution. These

last chapters explain the volume's title: the legacies of the comfort women remain with us today.

KEITH HOWARD

*A Paradise Lost: The Imperial Garden Yuanming Yuan.* By YOUNG-TSU WONG. [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001. 226 pp. Hard cover \$60.00, ISBN 0-8248-2226-9; paperback ISBN 0-8248-2328-1.]

Yuanming Yuan has become the most famous garden of imperial China thanks to its well-documented and tragic history. The nationalism of Chinese historians and the enthusiastic endorsement of Westerners – Victor Hugo used to compare Yuanming Yuan to the Parthenon – have combined to turn the ruins of the Yuanming Yuan into a major tourist attraction today. At the very beginning of the 18th century the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662–1722) supervised the simultaneous construction of two new garden complexes, the court's principal residence of Yuanming Yuan in Haidian (Beijing) and the summer residence of Bishu Shanhuang in Chengde. Even before 1860, when the French–British military expedition destroyed it, Yuanming Yuan was well known in the West. A report on the garden that Father Jean Denis Attiret mailed from Beijing in 1743 intervened at a turning point in the history of landscape design in Europe.

*A Paradise Lost: The Imperial Garden Yuanming Yuan* provides a comprehensive review of the architecture and history of this garden. Professor Young-tsu Wong, who has previously written about reform and revolution in modern China, discusses in this book the evolution, design, structures and organization of Yuanming Yuan. *Paradise Lost* aims at reconstructing the life of a defunct garden by bringing together a geographical setting and the administrative functions and cultural events that took place there. Although this is not his stated purpose, Wong also corrects basic misunderstandings that Westerners have had about the Yuanming Yuan, notably about the significance of the baroque Xiyang Lou garden that Jesuit missionaries designed. His careful analysis is based on the maps, buildings, gardens, and archival records of the Qing dynasty. Wong makes an extensive use of Chinese materials, especially the records published by the Chinese First Historical Archive in Beijing, and the scholarly contributions of the *Yuanming Yuan* journal.

The book chapters are grouped into an architecture section and a history section, the second being more developed. The physical appearance of the residence and the religious and political meanings embedded in its aesthetical arrangement are described in the opening chapters. The approach is factual more than interpretative, although deductions are made possible through instructive comparisons with the surviving gardens of the Ming–Qing era (Bishu Shanzhuang, Yihe Yuan, and the gardens of the Chang (Yangtze) River–Great Canal area). The historical chapters relate the ascent and decline of Yuanming Yuan. Historians may

especially enjoy Wong's detailed depiction of daily life at the Manchu court. *Paradise Lost* does not stop in 1860, when Yuanming Yuan was looted and burnt, but rather relates continuous attempts at rebuilding the garden estate as if it were possible to capture again the glory of the high Qing empire.

Well-illustrated and always informative, Wong's description should reach an audience not restricted to Sinologists. *Paradise Lost* seems to have been conceived in close association with Chinese scholars' concerns and indeed is interesting for what it tells us on the approach to garden history in the People's Republic of China. Conversely, it does not well reflect the political debates on the ethnic identity of the dynasty and the theoretical discussions on the Chinese garden that have recently developed in the West. *Paradise Lost* remains one of the most enjoyable books that can be read on garden history although it is neither the first study of Yuanming Yuan in English (see Carroll Malone's and Hope Danby's monographs), nor the only one to have been published in 2000–2001 (see Che Bing Chiu's lavish *Yuanming Yuan, Le Jardin de la Clarté parfaite*). To enlarge her exploration of the central role played by gardens in Qing culture, the reader may also want to consult Xiao Chi's *The Chinese Garden as Lyric Enclave* that came out last year.

PHILIPPE FORÊT

*The Chinese Lexicon: A Comprehensive Survey.* By YIP PO-CHING.  
[London and New York: Routledge, 2000. ISBN 0-415-15174-0.]

The simple definition of "lexicon" in the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* is "dictionary." Unlike a dictionary, though, the words in this work cannot be consulted through an alphabetical index, the only access being afforded by the chapter headings and subheadings of the three-page Contents list at the front. It does not pretend to be nor is it a dictionary, it is a systematic attempt to classify and in part to explain the typology and functions of the word stock of Chinese. The Index is a guide to the descriptors rather than to the material described.

The descriptive nature of this kind of task imposes a severe burden on an author. How can the job be done without recourse to lists of works in categories which are sometimes so broad that they are virtually open-ended and largely meaningless, yet if the lists are not complete how can the author be seen to be doing his job? There is no easy answer, and the result is inevitably a work which alternates between readable explanation and illustrative but necessarily incomplete and piecemeal enumeration. One is reminded of predecessor works such as Elijah Bridgman's *Chinese Chrestomathy*, the Rev. Justus Doolittle's *Vocabulary and Handbook of the Chinese Language*, and Arthur Smith's *Chinese Proverbs*, though it must be said that none of these is in the same league so far as systematic and scientific analysis is concerned.

*The Chinese Lexicon* treats the word stock in phonological, graphetic, morphological, syntactic, phonaesthetic, rhetorical and cultural terms, and there is some final discussion of other features such as wordplay, neologism and loanwords. The specialist linguist and the general sinologist will be consulting different parts of this book, but the layman innocent of the Chinese language will no doubt find the whole of it rather hard going.

It is the teacher of Chinese language who will benefit most from the great wealth of information contained here. As a source of example words and phrases, and as a concrete, reasoned confirmation of intuitively sensed patterns and correlations Dr. Yip's meticulous analysis is enormously helpful, and teachers of Chinese will be particularly grateful that throughout the text the Chinese characters (in simplified form) are given for every romanized expression.

HUGH D. R. BAKER

*Soul of Chaos: Critical Perspectives on Gao Xingjian*. Edited by KWOK-KAN TAM. [Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2001. 345 pp. \$38.00. ISBN 962-201-993-5.]

Without doubt numerous essays and articles and books about the work of the first literary Nobel prize winner to emanate from China are currently going to press. This is due not only to an acknowledgement of a literary event the Chinese-reading public awaited for a century, but also to the paucity of work so far done on Gao Xingjian in academic circles, especially on Gao the novelist. The initial anglophone media reactions to Gao's elevation focused almost uniquely on his reputation as a Chinese dramatist, while over the past decade the author had penned several major works of fiction and was celebrated in continental Europe as a novelist; people will read Chinese novels in translation but few will read play scripts, and even fewer will have had a chance to see his plays produced.

*Soul of Chaos* can to an extent be seen as a part of this dash to make up for lost time and fill in the lacunae on the Chinese literature bookshelves. However, much of the volume is comprised of essays and articles already published elsewhere and mostly some time ago. William Tay's essay for instance appeared first in Howard Goldblatt's *Worlds Apart* (reviewed in *The China Quarterly*, No.124 (1990), pp. 744–45), and even the editor Kwok-Kan Tam's contribution first appeared in 1990. It is no bad thing to bring together these published papers, but it does mean that the emphasis of the volume is thus focused on Gao the playwright. However, among the 16 contributions there are several recent essays that attempt to offer a critical and explanatory reading of Gao's 1990s narrative work. In particular, there are three contributions by Mabel Lee, the translator (into English) of *Soul Mountain*. In her first essay, after a digression on Nietzsche, Lu Xun, Jung and Taoism, Lee notes Gao's distaste for ideologies and in particular his aversion to nationalism. Lee

foregrounds Gao's own opinion that he lacks Lu Xun's talent for politics, a theme to which she returns in her essay on chapter 71 of *Soul Mountain*, but this self-proclaimed lack of talent has not prevented the author from taking an openly negative stand on patriotism and the "myth of the nation," an extremely political position to adopt both in China and in his newly-adopted *patrie*. Torbjorn Lodén's contribution is, although brief, one of the more interesting. Lodén discusses Gao's negotiation of the tradition in *Soul Mountain* and concludes with some thoughts on globalization and transnationalism in which he declares Gao's novel to be "a piece of 'world literature with Chinese characteristics.'" For Lodén, this is no condemnation, for he thinks "globalization of world culture" beneficial to the future of world literature and Chinese culture. Chen Xiaomei also refers to the intertextualities of world literature and above all "world theatre." Comparing Brecht's deliberate "misreading" of Chinese theatre to Gao's use of the "new" and "exotic" foreign theatrical traditions and effects in his plays *Bus Stop* and *Alarm Signal*, Chen notes that Gao is redeploying techniques that were initially borrowed from the Chinese tradition itself: "Gao benefits from both cultures, the East and the West, and from both historical heritages, the ancient and the modern, but he does so in a way that depends on misreadings and misunderstandings on every hand and in every direction." At a more general level, Chen's thesis claims that hybridity has become the natural condition of the theatre whether Chinese or Western, and she concludes that Sinology can no longer ignore or underestimate world literature and culture: "Rather all that is 'other' and 'alien' to it – which is finally to say, all that is Western – must now be recognized and inscribed within its proper interests."

There are glimpses, then, in this collection of essays of the kinds of interesting debates and arguments to which Gao's career can give rise. Gao's literary production is not without its controversial aspects which deserve to be engaged and challenged. However, with a few exceptions, the authors of the articles in this volume seem chary of moving beyond merely representing and explaining the author's words and ideas.

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