

# REVIEWS

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## THE ANCIENT WORLD

DIETZ OTTO EDZARD:

*Sumerian Grammar.*

(Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 Near and Middle East, 71.) xviii, 191 pp. Leiden: Brill, 2003. €85.

This eagerly awaited grammar presents an account of the Sumerian language in eighteen chapters: the first three provide an introduction to the features, affiliation and sounds of Sumerian, plus a guide to how it was written; these are followed by twelve chapters on the various parts of speech; the book rounds off with three further chapters to discuss Emesal and the influence of Akkadian on Sumerian, and to offer a few words to tie up loose ends.

The book is modern in a number of ways. As could be expected, it incorporates recent advances in our understanding of the language, including some that have very recently appeared and even some yet to appear (the long-awaited results of the sixth Sumerian grammar discussion group, held in Oxford in 1999). It also draws on the ISSL (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/psd/www/ISSL-form.html>) and provides references to ETCSL (<http://www-etcs.orient.ox.ac.uk/>), demonstrating the utility of Internet-based Assyriological materials. But more striking is the adoption of the transliteration style which has started to become more common among Sumerologists in recent times, giving us readings such as *ninta* ‘male’ and *ses* ‘brother’.

Looking for criticisms, one might point to proof-reading. Works intended as reference tools—especially those aimed at students—require even more rigorous attention than others, since students can easily be confused. Spare a thought for the beginner who learns that ‘city’ is read *eri* (*passim*; p. 19 URU), as in the name of the ED ruler of Lagas (pp. 19, 104, 124, 153 Lagaš), Irikagina (p. 102, Erikagina), whose inscriptions are referred to using the abbreviation Ukg. Likewise, ‘wood’ is *ĝeš* and ĜEŠ (except for: pp. 103, 146 <sup>gis</sup>; p. 8 GIŠ; p. 31 *ĝiš-gi-ĝiš-gi* ‘cane-brakes’), as used phonetically in *ĝeštug* (p. 8; *passim* *ĝeštu* and *ĝeštu(-g)*), which is written GIŠ.TÚG.PI (pp. 8, 150) and may alternatively be rendered <sup>gis-túg</sup>*ĝeštug* (p. 8).

Again in the interests of student sanity, perhaps it would have been better to have kept length marks off Sumerian vowels, e.g. p. 13, where some vowels have length marks, others accents; note also ‘50’ read *ninnû* (*passim*; see esp. p. 65), although [û] is absent from the repertory of Sumerian vocalic phonemes listed in 3.1.1. Given that the author extends his remit to take in elements of the writing system, a brief note on modern transliteration habits—especially with reference to accents and subscript numbers—would have been welcome. That the author does extend his remit in this way is a positive thing, however, since he thus greatly facilitates the difficult journey from transliteration to the transcription of grammatical analysis.

There are a few slips of the pen. In the list of determinatives, LÚ (the use of which is not actually reserved for male professions) is exemplified with (p. 9) <sup>lu</sup>*nu-kiri*, although the *lú* determinative in Sumerian texts is not normally,

if ever, applied to nu-(<sup>ġi</sup>)kiri<sub>6</sub> until after the OB period. In the discussion of phonology, the author laments the lack of B:B correspondences between Sumerian and Akkadian (p. 14), despite earlier (p. 13) quoting *bukin* = *bukinnu*. In his discussion of the locative case, the author seems to contradict himself. On p. 39 he states that: 'the main function of the locative is to indicate rest and arrest at a goal, not movement toward or into something (which would rather be rendered by the terminative ...)', while on p. 44 he summarizes the functions of the locative as being 'motion into, position inside' and that of the terminative as 'motion towards'. On p. 85 the 3rd pl. absolutive pronominal element for conjugation pattern 2a is given as -ne-B, while on p. 86 it appears as -(e)n-B. On p. 27 it is incorrectly stated that 'Sumerian u [referring here to ù] only occurs to connect phrases, not parts of speech'. Typos are rare and mostly harmless but it is worth correcting ġe<sub>24</sub>[ARADxKUR] to ġe<sub>26</sub>[GÁ] on p. 55, where the personal pronouns are introduced. On p. 93 the ventive 2<sup>nd</sup> sg. dative-locative indicator (28) should be *muera*, as on p. 103. Likewise, the ventive 2<sup>nd</sup> sg. directive indicator (56) could be expected to be reconstructed as *mueri*.

Chapter 8 consists of scarcely 100 words concerning 'Resuming the sequence of particles for possession, number and case'. Although this is an important matter to register, this could better have been accomplished as a brief note elsewhere in the volume, with appropriate references to further discussion. Comparative examples from four other agglutinating languages are adduced, with the conclusion: 'these few examples may show that there is no "universal" rule ...'.

Perhaps the most controversial part of this book will be chapter 17 'The Sumero-Akkadian linguistic area'. Here the author sets out in detail the reasons for thinking that Sumerian lived on as a natural language well into the Old Babylonian period; thankfully, the somewhat spurious 'last speaker' so often called upon in this debate is absent. Not everyone will agree with the author's conclusions but at least this side of the argument is well set out here. We may draw consolation from the fact that everyone agrees that Sumerian was heavily influenced by Akkadian, especially during the OB period.

As chapter 18 admits, there is still some fine-tuning to do in the field of Sumerian grammar. For example, with precative *h̄e* restricted to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> persons (p. 116), and affirmative (1) *h̄e* restricted to 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person forms referring to past actions (p. 117), how does one explain 1.8.1.5 Gilgameš and Huwawa A 115: ġe<sup>26</sup>-nam-ma ga-an-ši-re<sub>7</sub>-en-dè-en igi hu-mu-ni-ib-du<sub>8</sub>-ru-dè-en-dè-en, which can hardly be translated much differently from how the author himself did ('Gilgameš und Huwawa A. II. Teil.', in *ZA* 81 (1991) p. 205) 'Los denn, gehen wir auf ihn zu, wir wollen ihm ins Auge sehen!', assuming 1<sup>st</sup> pl. with future reference? Similarly, from context ġi<sub>6</sub> na-an-sá-e-en '(... bring me my sandals!) I do not want to spend the night here' ((6.1.08) proverb 8 Sec. B 28: 12) ought to be a 1<sup>st</sup> sg. negative cohortative rather than a 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> prohibitive, as one would expect from 12.11.9. A number of forms are encountered in OB Sumerian literary texts that seem not to be explicable within the author's framework. For example, (6.1.04) proverb 4.6 provides a dative form ba-e-a-e<sub>11</sub>-dè-dè-en; note also nam-mu-e-ni-dib-bé ((6.1.01) proverb 1.5), [nu]-mu-un-ta-e<sub>11</sub>-dè ((6.1.01) proverb 1.53 CBS 6139), si nu-mu-e-da-a-íl-i ((6.1.01) proverb 1.109 source FF), sipa h̄e-em-ta-e<sub>11</sub>-dè-e-en udu-ni ... ((6.1.16) proverb 16 Sec. B 2), a-na-àm mu-e-ni-ak 'what did you do there?' ((6.1.18) proverb 18.15). Future study may reveal whether such forms require modifications to the grammar or are simply scribal errors.

An example for the ventive dimensional indicator for 3<sup>rd</sup> pl. dative-locative (33 on p. 93) is provided by NBC 8058 ((6.1.02) proverb 2.7 source WWW): zu-a ùr-ra mu-ne-a-e<sub>11</sub>. The ventive 1<sup>st</sup> pl. comitative indicator (38) might also be found as meda, as in 1.8.1.5 Gilgameš and Huwawa A 10: <sup>d</sup>utu šul <sup>d</sup>utu ḥé-me-da-an-zu ‘Utu, der junge Utu, sollte es von uns erfahren haben’ (p. 171). Both meda and mueda are more commonly found marking 2<sup>nd</sup> sg. forms. An example for the ventive 2<sup>nd</sup> pl. dative-locative indicator may be found in proverb 5 A 71 = B 74: ḡá-e ga-mu-e-ne-ḥa-la ‘Let me share out for you’ (said by a fox to nine wolves). A possible example of a personal pronoun with terminative ending (see p. 56) might be found in (6.1.13) proverb 13.26: ḡá-šè. Diachronic and geographic variations in Sumerian receive little attention but a sensible balance must be struck, as it has been here.

To provide a coherent, comprehensive, detailed introduction to Sumerian in 200 pages is no mean feat. Inevitably the author did not have space to discuss issues in as much detail as one might have liked, but there are plenty of references to more detailed discussions and divergent opinion elsewhere. The HdO series aims carefully to select ‘scholarly reference works of lasting value, under the editorship of major scholars in the field’, criteria easily fulfilled by this volume. Throughout the book, one is struck by the learning and insight, as well as the humanity, which the author injects into his work. This grammar is a must for anyone concerned with Sumerian, at whatever level.

JON TAYLOR

MICHAEL SOKOLOFF:

*A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods.*

(Dictionaries of Talmud, Midrash and Targum, III.) 1582 pp.  
Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press; Baltimore and  
London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

MICHAEL SOKOLOFF:

*A Dictionary of Judean Aramaic.*

(Dictionaries of Talmud, Midrash and Targum, III.) 88 pp.  
Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003.

Michael Sokoloff has produced no fewer than three Aramaic dictionaries in recent years, with the two being reviewed here following closely upon his *Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (Ramat Gan, 1992). For the first time, the various dialects of Jewish Aramaic have been separated into their proper geographical categories, reflecting important differences in grammar, syntax, and lexicon between Eastern and Western Aramaic in Jewish sources. A welcome innovation of Sokoloff’s Babylonian Aramaic lexicon is the inclusion of words from Babylonian Jewish Aramaic magic bowls, which add to our knowledge of Babylonian Aramaic. Although published bowls still require collation and many bowls remain unpublished, this is a first step towards incorporating the vocabulary of the magic bowls into Babylonian Jewish Aramaic.

The question is whether the present lexicon replaces earlier lexicons of Jewish Aramaic, specifically those of Jacob Levy or Marcus Jastrow. The

user of Sokoloff's dictionary will generally find a concise, useful and accurate definition of a word, with ample references to ancient sources, and the author is to be commended for his lexicography. The problem is whether the user will be able to find the word. Sokoloff has relied upon manuscripts of the Talmud as the basis for his lemmas, rather than upon the printed editions of the Talmuds, from which the large majority of his users will be working. Sokoloff's lack of faith in the printed editions may be justified on academic grounds, but as a practical tool for reading Rabbinic texts he sometimes makes life difficult for the user, who may conveniently turn to Jastrow's *Dictionary* out of sheer frustration. To compensate the reader for this difficulty when searching for a word in a printed text, Sokoloff includes an apparatus at the end of the volumes to help find the lemmas in the printed editions.

The definitions provided by Sokoloff are often based upon Geonic explanations of Talmudic Aramaic, which raise certain other problems of methodology. There is no argument against collecting and presenting Geonic commentaries, since this is valuable additional information to the textual references and should not be ignored; on the other hand, it also has to be used with caution, particularly when Geonic texts may understand a word differently to how one might expect from the context itself or from comparative etymology.

The following detailed comments on individual words are intended to focus on Akkadian loanwords in Babylonian Jewish Aramaic, for which new data can be found in this Dictionary, adding to the earlier work of S. A. Kaufman, *The Akkadian Influences on Aramaic* (Chicago, 1974). The words discussed below have all been culled from medical contexts in the Babylonian Talmud, since these terms are considered as technical loanwords into Aramaic from Akkadian, having been borrowed into Talmudic Aramaic along with medical information originally transmitted from cuneiform sources.

*brwq* 'yellow', as a noun, 'cataract' (in the eyes) (DJBA 242): Sokoloff relies upon a Geonic commentary for the meaning of 'yellow', but the meaning of the noun *brwq* 'cataract' is much less certain, since the Akkadian word *barāqu*, although well attested in other contexts, is never used to refer to 'cataract' in Akkadian medical texts (see *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* 103 f.). Akkadian uses the word *barāru* 'to be filmy' in medical contexts referring to eye disease, and this is more likely to be the term indicating 'cataract' (or a similar condition), see J. Fincke, *Augenleiden nach Keilschriftlichen Quellen* (Würzburg, 2000), 86–91. Akkadian *barāru*, also used in the Š-stem, is likely to be responsible for the Talmudic Aramaic magical word *bryry* and the name *šbryr*, the demon who brings blindness; see M. Stol, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45 (1986), 298, and DJBA 246 and 1106.

*zyrp* 'a disease (perh, inflammation)' (DJBA 412, see also 422): Akkadian *šarāpu* 'to burn' has well attested cognate nominal forms in medical contexts referring to disease, such as the disease *šuruppu* (CAD § 261), *šurpu* (in the expression *šurup libbi* 'heart-burn', CAD § 256 f.), and another disease *širiptu* (CAD § 207), also referring to burning. The fricative /z/ corresponding to /š/ appears in other cognate terms, such as Hebrew *zrh* and Akkadian *šarāhu*, 'to light up' (see AHw 1083). In any case, the Akkadian homonym *šarāpu* (CAD § 104 f.), 'to dye', also used in tanning recipes, is a likely candidate for the rare verb in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic *šrp* (DJBA 973 f., 'to treat with alum') and the adjective *šryp* ('cleaned, bleached', DJBA 972).

*ʾyštwmk* (var. *ʾštwmk*) 'a tight opening between internal organs' (DJBA 121 f.). Sokoloff follows Krauss, *Lehnwörter* II, 78 (also giving the variant

'*ystwmk*') in stating that this comes from Greek *stomachos* (see also Jastrow, *Dictionary*, 98, 'heart muscle'). It might seem obvious that Greek loanwords are commonly found in Palestinian Aramaic while Akkadian loanwords are to be found in Babylonian Aramaic, but previous lexicons of Jewish Aramaic have not noted this distinction systematically, with the result that lexicographers often assumed Greek to be the main language of borrowing, even in Babylonia. However, the appearances of Greek loanwords in the Babylonian Talmud in Aramaic contexts are rare and must be subject to special scrutiny.

Sokoloff (DJBA 121 f.) cites a passage from the Syriac Book of Medicine using the Syriac word '*ystwmk*' referring to the stomach, to support the notion that this is a loanword from Greek. Despite appearing to be strong supporting evidence, the Syriac Book of Medicine was based primarily upon Galen, and there is no doubt that by the time of its composition (probably in the Byzantine period), Greek loanwords are well established in Syriac. This might not tell us much, however, about how a Greek word is introduced into earlier texts in the Babylonian Talmud (Ab. Zar. 29a). Even if this term '*ystwmk*' was originally borrowed from Greek, was it understood as 'stomach'? The word appears in the printed editions of Ab. Zar. 29a as '*ystwmk*' (see Krauss's variant above) and as such may have been understood in Babylonian Aramaic as a form of the root *smk*, 'to be viscous, thick' (DJBA 819), hence a 'thickening' of the heart, rather than 'opening' or even 'stomach', as translated by Sokoloff.

*kysn*' 'hemp-seed' pl., 'dish made of wheat, fruit, etc.' (DJBA 577), also used in *materia medica* in Erub. 29b (*kys'ny*). This word may be cognate to Akkadian *kiššānu*, a legume (CAD K 456 f.) which is common in medical recipes as well as in the ordinary diet, often appearing together with fruit, emmer, and other legumes, and both the seeds and 'flour' of this plant are attested. The evidence for 'hemp-seed' for Aramaic *kysn*' is not obvious. Other Akkadian plant names are mentioned in medical recipes, such as *dardara*' (Git. 70a, against diarrhoea), probably a loan from Akkadian *daddaru*, an ill-smelling/thorny plant (CAD D 17 f.) and *grgyr* (Erub. 28b) = Akkadian *gurguru* (CAD G 139).

*bšl*' 'to cook, with the form *bšwly* to suppurate' (DJBA 250), cites Git. 69a. The Gittin passage is probably based upon an Akkadian medical text listing diseases and recipes, in which each ailment is introduced by the preposition l 'for' plus a disease name. The term (*l*) *bšwly* is more likely to refer to the Akkadian disease name *bušānu*, a disease affecting the nose and mouth, perhaps diphtheria. The point is that the Aramaic root *bšl* is never otherwise used in medical contexts, and even the well-attested Akkadian term *bašālu* never refers to disease symptoms, including suppuration. The previous entry in the Git. 69a list, (*l*) *hynq*', also refers to the disease known in Akkadian medicine as *hinqu*, an illness of the nose, and it is likely that these technical medical terms belong together, especially since they refer to the same part of the anatomy. Sokoloff (DJBA 457 f.) did not recognize this second term *hynq*' in Git. 69a as an Akkadian loanword, preferring to extrapolate the meaning in this context as 'for (pustules[?]) of the larynx' (DJBA 458).

*pwq*' ('uncertain') (DJBA 891), recognized as part of the anatomy, since the only context cited refers to 'the joints of the loin from the ...'. We suggest the equally rare Akkadian noun *pūqu* referring to the cleft of the buttocks.

*šybt*' 'name of a demon' (DJBA 1132), is given as a phonetic variant of *šybt*' 'demon, plague' (ibid.). Another term, *šybt*', may refer to a 'medicinal

potion(!) [not 'motion'] (ibid.). Two Akkadian terms are probably relevant: *šibtu* 'plague, epidemic' (CAD Š 387) and *šibu*, a disease name (CAD Š 399).

This review has less to say about Sokoloff's small *Dictionary of Judean Aramaic*, except to return to the question of Akkadian loanwords in Judean Aramaic.

*mrq* 'to clear, pay' (DJA 64), referring to clearing any previous claims on property in order to guarantee its right to be sold, looks like a technical loanword from Akkadian *murruqu* (CAD M/2 222 f.). The term *mrq* is not used in quite the same sense in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, see Sokoloff, DJPA, 332, where *mrq* (used in the Pa'el) refers to paying off the wife's divorce claims (*ketubbah*); the word in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic means 'to clear of legal claims' (also used in the Pa'el), see Sokoloff DJBA 710f. The question is whether such uses of the term are borrowed from Akkadian or common Semitic roots used in both Akkadian and Aramaic (and hence not included among Akkadian 'influences' on Aramaic listed by Kaufman. It is likely that the term *mrq* in Aramaic is indeed a technical loanword from Akkadian, derived from the D-stem of *marāqu*, 'to crush, break' (CAD M/1 266 f.). In Neo-Assyrian contracts, the term *marāqu* indicates destruction of a tablet or contract after the terms of the sale have been fulfilled or to invalidate the document; see K. Radner, *Die Neuassyrischen Privatrechtsurkunden* (Helsinki, 1997), 52, 75, 77.

The question is whether there may have been alternative terminology in Aramaic for 'clearing' a property which could have been used instead. One usage of Aramaic *zky*, 'to enter a plea' (in court), is cited by Sokoloff (DJBA 413) as being derived from the D-stem of Akkadian *zakû*, 'to cleanse, clear [of impurities]' (CAD Z 28). However, Akkadian *zakû* 'to cleanse' was used in a precise legal sense meaning to 'cleanse' a person or property from legal or monetary obligations, such as taxes, but the Akkadian term is not used in any general legal sense. Aramaic *zky* is also not used in contracts referring to the 'cleansing' of obligations.

I would contend that *mrq* should not simply be viewed as a common Semitic term for clearing from legal claims, but it originally referred to the breaking or grinding up of a clay tablet contract no longer required, in order to avoid confusion at a later date. This act of breaking a tablet developed an abstract meaning, in the D-stem in Akkadian and corresponding Pael form in Aramaic, referring to the clearing of any previous debts against a property. The technical term *mrq* < *murruqu* spread to both Palestinian and Babylonian Aramaic through the context of legal terminology and contracts, perhaps as early as the Persian period.

These few suggestions are intended to draw attention to how much lexicography remains to be done in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, as in all other Semitic languages. The writing of a dictionary is the most basic of philological research, combined with the editing of new texts, and these processes must continue in tandem with every new generation of scholarship. At the same time, this kind of work is never quite superseded, and in the same way that Marcus Jastrow's dictionary never completely replaced that of Jacob Levy, Michael Sokoloff's will not entirely supplant the dictionaries of his predecessors. Nevertheless, Sokoloff's last two volumes are important milestones in Aramaic lexicography and the author has earned the gratitude of his colleagues for a long time to come.

MICHEL TANRET:

*Per Aspera ad Astra. L'Apprentissage du cunéiforme à Sippar-Amnānum pendant la Période Paléobabylonienne Tardive.*

(Mesopotamian History and Environment, Series III, Texts.

Volume I: Sippar-Amnānum: The Ur-Utu Archive, Tome 2.) x, 178 pp., 35, xlv plates. Ghent: University of Ghent, 2002.

This book publishes eighty late Old Babylonian clay tablets and fragments found in the 1970s at the site of Tell ed-Der, a few kilometres south-west of Baghdad's urban sprawl. They have in common that they are exercise tablets stemming from the first stages of scribal education. For the most part singularly unprepossessing, had they been found by the earliest excavators of this site, even in an interval of more than a century they would surely have attracted no attention whatsoever. These unremarkable tablets are valuable because of two facts: they were found in the same building, and the excavation of that building was carried out with meticulous and painstaking regard to locus and stratum. The detailed record kept of the archaeological context of these and other small finds, in combination with the careful analysis of the remains of walls, floors and installations, allows Michel Tanret to develop a persuasive thesis with regard to the tablets' function and history.

Some two-thousand other documents were recovered from the building. Many were published in the first volume of the series by Tanret's colleagues, K. Van Lerberghe and G. Voet (MHET I, 1). This rich archive of tablets, mostly legal documents and letters, enabled these and other scholars quickly to determine that the building was a private dwelling house with an interesting history. It belonged first to a lady called Lamassni, who lived at Sippar as a celibate 'priestess' (*naditum*) under King Ammiditana of Babylon (1683–1647 in the conventional chronology). Twenty-one years after buying it, she sold the house to a senior lamentation priest called Inanna-mansum, who had it completely rebuilt for his own use. Early in the reign of Ammišaduqa (1646–1626), after forty-one years in office, Inanna-mansum retired. He was succeeded by his son Bēlānum and died soon afterwards. In due course the son, who had taken the new name Ur-Utu, renovated the house, only for it to burn down a few months later.

Tanret's book falls into four parts. First it deals with the archaeology of the house, based on the account of the building's excavator, Hermann Gasche (pp. 1–24). The heart of the book consists of annotated editions of the eighty tablets (pp. 25–130). There follows a synthesis, in which Tanret sets out his arguments and conclusions regarding who wrote the tablets, when they wrote them and under whose supervision (pp. 131–71). Concordances and bibliography are appended (pp. 172–8). The book closes with autograph copies of all but one tablet (pls. 1–35) and a fair selection of photographs (pls. I–XLV).

Tanret observes that his eighty tablets fall into two groups. Twelve came from levels associated with the house built by Lamassāni and torn down by Inanna-mansum. Almost all of the remainder were found in the building as it stood before Ur-Utu's renovations; the few that came to light in the later levels are probably strays. Tanret argues that this speaks for two individual episodes of scribal instruction, not one. He goes on to elaborate an hypothesis that fits the facts available but cannot be proved in all its details. Accordingly the tablets found in Lamassāni's house were the residue of the training of a young female relative, such as a niece, to act as her companion and secretary and

eventually to take over her sacred duties. Such an arrangement is found with other *nadītum*-ladies of the Old Babylonian period (p. 139).

Tanret argues that the later tablets derive from the education of a single pupil, and identifies this individual as Ur-Utu, Inanna-mansum's favoured son. At that time still known as Bēlānum, he would have needed to learn to read and write to take up the duties of senior lamentation priest in succession to Inanna-mansum (p. 155). Bēlānum's teacher was not his father, however, but instead his father's secretary, a man known as Šumum-liši (p. 156). The period of instruction necessarily fell somewhere between the engagement of Šumum-liši and Inanna-mansum's retirement, an interval of nine years, but probably did not occupy all of that time (p. 162). It is a convincing history, told on the understanding that other interpretations are possible.

The synthesis also holds a comparative discussion of Old Babylonian scribal education, informed by Tanret's long study of the topic and the more recent contributions of other scholars, working on the scribal exercises of eighteenth-century Nippur and their findspots, and on scribal education as reflected in Sumerian literature. The material from Inanna-mansum's house confirms the view that scribal education in the Old Babylonian period was small-scale and private.

In addition to deepening our understanding of the social context of education, Tanret makes important additions to knowledge in the matter of the technology of cuneiform writing in the Old Babylonian period. Inanna-mansum's house yielded a dozen examples of styli of different sizes, already published by Gasche. Tanret's discussion of them will bring them more unavoidably to the attention of Assyriologists. He makes the telling observation that they are all too short to be held like the styli depicted on Neo-Assyrian reliefs; these Old Babylonian styli must have been held with the top enclosed within the scribe's palm (p. 26). This helps to explain why modern attempts to reproduce cuneiform writing with long styli have yielded unconvincing results.

Set into the floor of the courtyard of Inanna-mansum's house, as it stood in the years before Ur-Utu renovated it, was a small baked-brick installation filled with discarded tablets and capped with a large quantity of clean clay, which Gasche identified as a place where new clay was stored and old clay recycled. Noting comparable installations in other Old Babylonian houses where boys learned to write and in the Neo-Sumerian temple of Inanna at Nippur, Tanret equates them with the known Sumerian term *pú im.ma*, literally 'clay cistern', i.e. a bin for tablet-clay. The bin was situated in the courtyard for good reason. Reading cuneiform demands bright sunlight, and no doubt writing it did too. Tablet clay was therefore stored and recycled where it would most easily come to hand for those who wanted to use it.

A third addition to our knowledge of the realia of cuneiform writing and scribal education concerns a detail of tablet format. Some oblong school exercise tablets from Kassite-period Nippur have long been known to exhibit an unusual format of inscription, in that lines of text on the obverse fall at right angles to lines of text on the reverse. This format appears to be an innovation of this period at Nippur, for no Old Babylonian tablets from there (or elsewhere in the south) are inscribed in this way. Among Tanret's Old Babylonian tablets from Sippar, however, are four that exhibit the same odd format (nos 26–9). Tanret considers the implications of this for the tablets' contents, regrettably almost illegible (pp. 160–1).

This discovery furnishes new evidence for the historical development of the syllabus of scribal instruction. The syllabus was not homogeneous in the Old

Babylonian period. In Nippur, Isin and Ur scholars stuck to a curriculum based largely on Sumerian literary works favoured by Šulgi of Ur and his successors in Isin. Copies of Akkadian literary texts occur, but are very rare. In northern Babylonia scribal education was less rigidly bound to the old ways, both in orthography and in texts studied. Learner scribes at Tell Harmal and Tell Haddad, for example, were exposed to the Sumerian corpus, often in corrupt traditions, but also to a greater number of texts in Akkadian.

The southern cities were abandoned during the reign of Samsuiluna and their populations fled north. It seems likely that this event was one of the reasons for the diminishing role of Sumerian in the later curriculum. When Nippur was resettled in the fourteenth century, its scribal apprentices studied a syllabus with a much greater Akkadian content than their Old Babylonian counterparts. This new syllabus was at least partly of north Babylonian origin. Thanks to Tanret's study, the format of exercise tablet in which the axis of writing turns 90° between obverse and reverse can now be counted another feature of northern origin. Its presence at Kassite Nippur is a symptom of the import of northern ways of education.

This book is a fine example of how the archaeological and textual records can combine to produce a deeper and truer understanding of the material and intellectual culture of ancient Mesopotamia.

A. R. GEORGE

AMAR ANNUS:

*The God Ninurta in the Mythology and Royal Ideology of Ancient Mesopotamia.*

(State Archives of Assyria Studies Vol. 14.) xvi, 242 pp. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002.

It is extraordinary to report that this volume is the first monograph-size study of Ninurta for more than eighty years, since Maurus Witzel had his book on *Der Drachenkämpfer Ninib* published privately in Fulda in 1920. The uncertainty then attached to the correct decipherment of the god's name was finally laid to rest in 1939. While the texts that relate Ninurta's mythology and sing his praise have been periodically edited and translated in the intervening period, as a divine personality the son of Enlil of Nippur has been given individual attention only in a few short encyclopedia articles. In this very welcome book Amar Annus sets out to give a comprehensive synthesis of information about Ninurta on the basis of modern Assyriological scholarship.

The study falls into three parts, each of which occupies a chapter. The first chapter examines the role that Ninurta played in the exercise of kingship. The evidence is presented as an historical essay, starting with the Early Dynastic period and ending with the Late Babylonian. The second part of the book examines matters of cult and ritual, and seeks to find how religious practice and syncretistic theology shed light on Ninurta's part in royal ideology. The third chapter turns to the mythology of Ninurta, and studies it also from the perspective of royal ideology. An epilogue considers how the mythology, theology and cult of Ninurta left an impact on the world of Late Antiquity. Many themes and issues recur throughout the book, especially the syncretism with Nabû of Babylon.

Annus's synthesis is an extremely dense piece of work, founded on very extensive reading and heavily punctuated by citation and quotation. Some original ideas emerge. Few would have characterized Ninurta as a god of wisdom, but Annus does, on the grounds that some ancient sources indisputably hold him up as a master of scribal lore (p. 5). Not all the evidence Annus adduces for him as a divine scholar-clerk is germane, however, and it is going too far to assert generally that 'Ninurta must have exercised the functions of a scribe in Nippur' (p. 86). Yet it does seem that sometimes Ninurta took this role, and that the god Nabû acquired his much better-attested duty as divine scribe from the syncretism with Ninurta.

In studying one deity of the pantheon in particular, it is essential to have a deep understanding of the system within which that deity operates. The Babylonians very helpfully left behind a detailed statement of that system, in the form of the god-list *An = Anum*, most recently edited by R. Litke, *A Reconstruction of the Assyro-Babylonian God-Lists* (New Haven, 1998). This list has much to tell us about the personality and function of the deities of the Sumero-Babylonian pantheon. It is cited too infrequently in Annus's book; it would have been especially useful to have quoted the sections of this and other lists that give the names of Ninurta and his relations. With regard to the present point, the god-lists and related texts show that in Nippur theology most aspects of divine scribthood were the business, curiously, of goddesses: Ninimma, Enlil's librarian, and Nissaba, his scribe and scholar.

Ninurta's scribal expertise is not generalized, like Nabû's, because unlike Nabû he did not usurp the roles of Ninimma and Nissaba. What is most at issue with Ninurta is the business of inscribing divine decisions, particularly the king's destiny, on the Tablet of Destinies, and of controlling the same as keeper of Enlil's seal. In his possession of the Tablet of Destinies he acts as his father's secretary and that is the salient point, for there is a parallel relationship to be found in his two better-known functions, as warrior and as ploughman. Annus falls in with other scholars in identifying the warrior Ninurta as one who does battle on Enlil's behalf, explicitly to avenge his father's enemies (esp. pp. 121–3). He documents Ninurta's patronage of agriculture but characterizes it as a concern for fertility, following the common association of agriculture and the creation of abundance espoused by such scholars as Thorkild Jacobsen (esp. pp. 152–6). Between these two disparate activities Annus finds a connection, for they are both important duties of kingship, to defend and feed the nation (p. 203).

Another way of looking at Ninurta's portfolio of duties is to observe that in all of them he is the young son who performs tasks for which his father is too old: he goes to battle, he drives the plough-team and he acts as secretary. In this respect Ninurta and Enlil present a model that replicates a human social ideal, in which power is owned by senior men but wielded by their sons. Ninurta, then, is the archetypal Mesopotamian prince, young, vigorous and strong. This explains why the investiture of princes seems to have taken place in his temples (and later Nabû's). Ninurta's well-attested patronage of hunting (pp. 102–08) and his literacy are also elucidated by his essential princedom, for, as we know from the claims of Shulgi and Ashurbanipal, these were the twin accomplishments of the ideal prince. The Assyrian king was identified with Ninurta (pp. 94–101) not just because they held in common the duty of defending the land (p. 204), but because the king was the executive of the god Ashur, and when Ashur became identified with Enlil, the king became the mortal counterpart of Ninurta.

Annus is to be congratulated on having given Assyriology a very rich tool with which to consider the divine personality of Ninurta. His commentary is full of interesting ideas and illuminating juxtapositions. While here and there one may disagree with this approach or that conclusion, the extraordinarily complex and abundant primary evidence makes consensus on difficult issues a vain hope.

A. R. GEORGE

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THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

JÜRGEN WASIM FREMBGEN:

*Nahrung für die Seele: Welten des Islam.*

175 pp. Munich: Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, 2003.

*Nahrung für die Seele* presents an introduction to the world of Islam that emphasizes the plurality of ways in which Islam is actually practised. The author explains in his introduction that he is guided by the perspectives of Islamic studies (*Islamwissenschaft*) and ethnography. The result is not merely an unusual preliminary survey of Islam, but also an innovative appraisal of the material culture of Islam, in which objects from popular as well as courtly life are carefully sited in their social, ritual and intellectual contexts. The volume is further refreshing in its shift of emphasis towards the eastern Islamic world, whereby the Arab Middle East is allowed to set neither the religious nor the artistic tempo. While North Africa and the Fertile Crescent are far from ignored, special attention is paid to religious forms and their material expression in regions such as Iran and South Asia.

In his introduction, Frembgen stresses the fallacy of regarding Islam as a monolithic entity and argues instead for a multi-faceted model of plural worlds of Islam, each with its distinctive local context and flavour. The first, and longest, of the three main sections of the book addresses the religious world of Islam. Here the author describes in some detail what he outlines as the main forms of Islam, namely orthodox legalistic (or learned) Islam, political (or ideological) Islam, the Islam of the Sufis, and folk Islam. A further sub-section discusses belief and prayer.

The second major section, addressing the art of the Muslim world, places material culture centre stage. The author speaks of the far-reaching synthesis of art and religion in the Muslim world, in which art forms are intimately bound up with patterns of belief. However, modernization, which is seen as having led to the sacrifice of the traditional material culture of the Muslim world for industrial kitsch, is regarded with aesthetic suspicion. Its side-effects are noted to include the ascendance of objects of a transcendental 'pan-Islamic' character and the abandonment of religious themes in the visual and plastic arts. Sub-sections discuss characteristics and main forms of Islamic art, including arabesque and geometric forms. With its emphasis on the spirituality of Islamic art, some readers may find this section reminiscent of the work of the late Annemarie Schimmel, in that its interpretation is as much phenomenological as ethnographical. A further sub-section on figurative representation and its prohibition emphasizes the need to factor in historical change, which can show the waxing and waning of purist influence. A fascinating aside illustrates this point through the rise of the Afghan 'Kalashnikov carpet' (on

which the author has worked extensively) during the jihad of the 1980s, and its subsequent demise under the edicts of the Taliban a decade later.

The third main section of the book, devoted to the lifeworld (*Lebenswelt*) of the Muslims, again emphasizes the diversity of Islamic lifestyles. An introductory sub-section is followed by an ethnography in miniature of living Islam in Punjab, replete with sections on social structure, public and domestic architecture, the household, the cult of the saints, and folk belief and magic. A significant addition is a description of the expression of Punjabi Muslim *joie de vivre* (*Lebensfreude*) through kite flying, the enjoyment of 'Lollywood' films, wrestling or massage. The methodological sincerity of this ethnographic perspective is echoed in a short afterword that, *pace* Edward Said, warns of the danger of Orientalist abstractions. For *Nahrung für die Seele* is clearly aimed at a general readership, mindful of the contemporary equation of Islam and global terrorism. Amid the plethora of books published in recent years aiming to 'explain' Islam (and, in more intellectually dubious cases, elucidate how a whole civilization 'went wrong'), Frembgen's emphasis on the lived expression of Islam, as opposed to the neo-Orientalist obsession with doctrine, is exemplary.

Despite this, the author's interpretive take on his subject matter does create constraints that unnecessarily limit the breadth of his perspective, particularly with regard to the artistic expression of the relationship between Islam and modernity. No one can deny the decline in traditional craftsmanship across the Muslim world. But uncharacteristically for an ethnographer, at times one detects the lament of the old-style connoisseur that Frembgen's work in general has done much to question. Since the rupture with tradition (and its counterpart, which is the desire to re-create it) is a key characteristic of what it means to be modern, the volume may therefore have benefited from a discussion of the ways in which Muslim artists and craftsmen have adapted to the modern world and its demands. After all, even the Pharaonic kitsch sold in the *sugs* of modern Cairo is rich in the local meanings implicit in an ethnographic Islam, and it seems worth asking whether an Egyptian Muslim feels nationalistic pride, aniconic wrath or only the alienation of the postmodern condition as he produces forged idols of Anubis for European tourists. Side-stepping spirituality for a sense of Muslim material culture in its changing marketplace may therefore have helped tackle the relationship between Muslim art and modernity by noting shifts in patronage from pre-colonial indigenous elite, to colonial connoisseur and global tourist. Even in by-passing the vast tourist market for Muslim handicrafts, there remains scope to discuss the modern art of such countries as Iran and Pakistan without outright dismissal. Similarly, the incorporation of something of the cultural world of the Muslim diasporas and their own growing artistic vitality seems a lost opportunity.

While this volume remains an extremely useful introduction to the world of Islam, specialists interested in the author's work on material culture may do well to consult such monographs as his splendid *Kleidung und Ausrüstung islamischer Gottsucher* (Wiesbaden, 1999). Yet as the work of a museum curator no less than an ethnographer, the selection of 126 mainly colour images of strange and neglected objects provides an arresting visual tour of a lesser-known Islam. In all truth, the delight given by images ranging from an Omani shoulder-blade writing board to a Moroccan inkwell in the form of a mausoleum more than justifies the purchase of this visually stunning publication.

JOHN CARSWELL with a contribution by JULIAN HENDERSON:  
*Iznik: Pottery for the Ottoman Empire.*  
 164 pp. London: The Islamic Art Society, 2003.

This is a catalogue of an exhibition held at the Sheraton Doha Hotel, Qatar, in March 2003. It is unlike many exhibition catalogues in that it is luxuriously produced, in hard covers, and of a format almost square rather than oblong, which makes it lie better on a desk than in the hand. The English text is supplemented with an Arabic translation.

The first impression to arrest the eye is the stunning photography. The thirty-four objects are dramatically set against a black background, and each entry is given at least a full-page photograph, with foldouts sometimes accommodating series of tiles. There is often a palpable sense of the objects, rendered all the more real through the imperfections that a few pieces show (e.g. cat. no. 15). When pottery pieces are represented, a photograph is also given of the side profile of the object, replacing the traditional drawing. This is a welcome innovation in that it permits us to see the exterior design, even if this is usually less striking than the interior.

The one unsuccessful aspect of the design, I feel, was the decision to replace paragraphs with bullets in the introductory chapters. This does not seem to have been a question of space, as the text is frequently surrounded by blank space fitted in between illustrations of details of the catalogue entries. The nearly square format and small font also mean that the lines are around 25 words long, a problem exacerbated by the lack of paragraphs. A two-column layout would have made for easier reading.

However, readers of this review will be most interested in the quality of the objects and the accompanying texts. All are excellent. According to the foreword, most of the collection comes from the Museum of Islamic Art of Qatar. No further mention is made of ownership; it would have been desirable for this to be clarified in the catalogue. Do all the pieces belong to the Museum, or only those with an inventory number (all except nos 3, 6–7, 10 and 13), and in which private collection or collections might the others be found?

In any case, even though the Museum of Islamic Art of Qatar is one of the world's younger collections of Islamic art, it is evident that a discerning hand has guided the acquisitions. As Carswell points out, even though the number of pieces in the exhibition is small (34), their variety is such that they can give an overview of the development of the style. Nine of the entries are for tiles, or assemblages of tiles, with parallels in standing monuments or in other collections given in the catalogue. Care is given to note the previous collections to which the pieces belonged, and this is supplemented by nine photographs of labels from previous collectors or exhibitions, a useful aid to researching the history of collecting.

Carswell's introduction gives an overview of the development of the industry, providing a clear account of the links with imported Chinese material. He also discusses the work of the Masters of Tabriz school whose work is known first from the Yesil Cami in Bursa, although surprisingly he states (p. 15) that all trace of them was lost after their work at the Uç Serefeli (1438–48), ignoring the tilework of the Fatih mosque in Istanbul and the tomb of Cem Sultan in Bursa (1479) attributed by Julian Raby, in his book on Iznik with Nurhan Atasoy, to the same school. But while the Persian potters

undoubtedly contributed to the taste for tilework at the Ottoman court, Carswell correctly points out that the products of the Iznik kilns show no links with their work. Julian Henderson also gives a succinct but illuminating technical account of the production of Iznik wares.

This book therefore can serve both as a short introduction to the topic of Iznik pottery and tilework and as a detailed exposition of some of its finest examples.

BERNARD O'KANE

ABOUBAKR CHRAIBI (ed.):

*Les Mille et Une Nuits en Partage.*

528 pp. Paris: Sindbad, Actes Sud, 2004. €30.

In May 2004 a conference sponsored by UNESCO on the heritage of *The Thousand and One Nights* was held in Paris. Publication of its proceedings has followed with remarkable swiftness. *Les Mille et Une Nuits en Partage* contains thirty-five papers and it would take up too much space even to list all of their titles here. The pretext for the conference was the three-hundredth anniversary of the publication of Antoine Galland's translation of *Alf Layla wa Layla* as *Les Mille et une nuits*. It is hardly surprising then that several of the papers are devoted specifically to Galland himself and the degree to which he made the *Nights* his own creation. Muhsin J. Musawi deals with the impact of Galland on English literature. Sylvette Larzul considers Galland's translating techniques. Jean-François Perrin explores the artistry of Galland in the story of 'Aladdin and his magic lamp'. Margaret Sironval gives an account of the impact of Galland and the later translator, Charles Mardrus, on the French reading public. Jeanine Miquel mines Galland's diaries for clues to the creative process.

What is more surprising is that the Russian pioneer of discourse analysis, Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) features almost as prominently in these papers as Galland. Bakhtin, an expert on Dostoevsky and Rabelais, wrote nothing about *The Thousand and One Nights*. Nevertheless, several of the contributors to the Paris conference have sought to reapply his ideas about the dialogic imagination and the spirit of carnival to the medieval Arab story collection. In the opening to her essay on Pasolini's film, *Il Fiore delle Mille et Una Notte*, Wen-chin Ouyang observes that the varied locations in which this version of the tales was shot leave it open to a Bakhtinian reading, which is plausible, though this is not in fact what she attempts. Similarly, Muhsin J. Musawi in 'Présence et impact de Galland en Anglais: les Mille et Une Nuits, contes Arabes, la traduction comme texte et sous-texte' invokes Bakhtin's *Rabelais and His World* and Bakhtin's notion of the 'interior infinite'. However, whereas in Bakhtin the discovery of the interior infinite by nineteenth-century Romantic writers was integrally linked to their deployment of grotesque imagery, Musawi redeploys the term to make it refer to critical responses to the *Nights* that were conditioned by imperial and sensual preoccupations. This reads more like Edward Said than Bakhtin, but in any case the 'interior infinite' makes no further appearance in Musawi's logging of critical readings of the *Nights*. One comes away from his account of eighteenth-century readers

and critics of the *Nights* in English with the disagreeable impression that their enjoyment of the stories was contaminated by imperial, bourgeois or dilettantish attitudes. Richard Van Leeuwen (who has translated the *Nights* into Dutch) is more successful in applying Bakhtinian analysis to the subject of 'Orientalisme, genre et réception des *Mille et Une Nuits* en Europe'. Specifically, he uses Bakhtin's notion of genre to encompass and define a body of translation and fiction produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. A genre is dialogic. It has a structured vision that can be transmitted from generation to generation and it relies on a pact between reader and writer. Writers working in the *Nights* genre included Lane, Burton, Mardrus, Cazotte, Dumas and Proust. In accordance with Bakhtin's approach to literature, Van Leeuwen stresses the heterogeneous nature of European responses to the *Nights*, as opposed to Said's restrictive contraposition of Orientalists and the inevitable 'Other'. In a study of sections of 'The Hunchback' cycle of stories in the *Nights*, Jean-Patrick Guillaume refers to Bakhtin's stress on popular festivals in his work on Rabelais. Here the invocation of the Russian *maître à penser* seems appropriate, for there is indeed a carnival element to the Hunchback cycle (which starts with a tailor and his wife going out to a place of entertainment where they encounter a drunken hunchback who sings and plays the tambourine). Moreover the story cycle proceeds to its conclusion by a series of unmaskings. As in *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, the narrative is full of references to the grotesque and the deformed. Guillaume goes on, however, further to argue that the anonymous transmitter of three of the stories, featuring respectively a Muslim, a Christian and a Jew, had the proto-Rabelaisian and subversive intent of mocking the humourlessness of the three religions. Kadhim Jihad, in 'Poésie des *Mille et Une Nuits*', commends the medieval text's revolt against the rules of grammar and its variety of voices prefiguring the 'monde carnavalesque à la Rabelais'. In 'La traduction comme ouverture sur l'autre', Mohamed Agina raises the question of whether the *Nights* can be considered a dialogic text in the Bakhtinian sense, without, however, coming to any clear conclusion.

Some of the best papers dispense with invocations to the Russian master. Aboubakr Chraïbi has provided the volume with a brief but valuable introduction in which he suggests that the stories of the *Nights* are primarily about justice—an extremely shrewd observation on the general tenor of the stories. The Moroccan novelist and literary critic Abdelfattah Kilito has written a sparkling quasi-autobiographical tailpiece, 'Les *Nuits*, un livre ennuyeux?'. Kilito recalls how he was led back to the *Nights* by first reading Voltaire, Proust and other French writers (in much the same way as the poet and critic Adonis came to Abu Nuwas from a reading of Baudelaire and Rimbaud). Ferial Ghazoul discusses my own novel, *The Arabian Nightmare* in tandem with John Barth's *Chimera*. Having learnt from Ghazoul that I am a postmodernist, I am delighted and surprised (in much the same way that Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* was delighted and surprised to learn that he had been speaking prose all his life). The two papers on Japanese translations and adaptations of the *Nights* are of immense interest as they raise complex questions about the nature of Orientalism. However, the most interesting contributions of all are the most technical. Jérôme Lentin's and Georgine Ayyoub's papers on the Arabic of the *Nights* complement one another rather well and break new ground in this field. Elsewhere, in quite a few papers, contributors with no independent access to Arabic rely excessively

on details that are peculiar to the rather free translations of Galland or Mardrus.

ROBERT IRWIN

ELIE KEDOURIE:

*The Chatham House Version and Other Middle-Eastern Studies.*

xvi, 488 pp. Chicago: Ivan R Dee, 2004. £17.95.

Of all Elie Kedourie's books *The Chatham House Version* has had the greatest impact. Timing may have had something to do with it. The book first appeared in 1970, just as Britain was completing her withdrawal from the Middle East and by which time it was also plain that secular Arab nationalism, at least as embodied in the policies of Nasserism and Ba'athism, was a poor recipe for the ills of the region. But the directness of Kedourie's attack on British policy and the manner in which he focused his onslaught on the interpretation of the movement of forces in the Middle East by a well-known institution and especially by the respected figure of Arnold Toynbee—'the shrill and clamant voice of English radicalism, thrilling with self-accusatory and joyful lamentation'—awakened new interest in his interpretation of the course of Middle Eastern history. With the exception of the title piece the articles which made up the volume had all appeared before, although Kedourie revised them for the book. Considered individually they were masterly dissections of particular events in which archives, analysis and style contributed to a rich satisfaction on the part of the reader as well as to academic illumination. Considered collectively they presented a picture of what Kedourie himself described as 'successive and cumulative manifestations of illusion, misjudgment, maladroitness and failure' on the part of British policy makers.

In an argument carefully and brilliantly constructed from the evidence of the documents Kedourie argued that British officials had come to think that empire was out of date, that nationalism was the future and that Britain should seek to withdraw from direct control and move towards a position, based in part on treaty, from which she could endeavour to influence developments in the Middle East. They were mistaken, he contended, in their diagnosis and in their remedies: the decline of empire and the triumph of nationalism were not inevitable, still less were they desirable; and the results of the British abdication were commonly misery for the people of the region. British officials had had a choice but they had made the wrong choice. Their apologists were mistaken, if they were not dishonest, when they argued that Britons had had no choice but were obliged to bow to an unstoppable force.

Perhaps, as remarked above, Kedourie's was a message the time for which was ripe in 1970. But it was the greatness of the scholar that enabled him to demolish the prevailing structure of interpretation of modern Middle Eastern history and replace it with a new and persuasive view. Those who would seek to dismantle Kedourie's interpretation must be prepared to subject the archives to the same rigorous scrutiny as did the master. His book is still essential reading for all students of the period and the region. The new edition is welcome and one hopes that it may be followed shortly by new editions of his other two great collections of articles: *Arabic Political Memoirs*, which has become exceedingly difficult to find, and *Islam in the Modern World*.

M. E. YAPP

## SOUTH ASIA

K. PADDAYYA (ed.):

*Recent Studies in Indian Archaeology.*

(Indian Council of Historical Research. Monograph Series 6.) x, 454 pp. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal and Indian Council of Historical Research, 2002. Rs. 950.

Part of the title of this volume, 'Recent studies', implies a disparate collection of papers; but this is misleading. The book tries to be as far as possible a summation of the state of play in Indian archaeology. Period-based chapters cover the Lower Palaeolithic up to the Medieval, with thematic chapters at the end including topics such as rock art, osteoarchaeology and dating. It is much smaller than its main 'rival', the four-volume *Indian Archaeology in Retrospect* (Ed. R. Settar and Ravi Korisettar) (Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research/Manohar, 2002), which was published in the same year (and sponsored by the same body); and it therefore cannot claim to have the same comprehensive coverage. But for teaching it is best to use the two works together. In a number of cases there are gaps in the *Retrospect* which *Recent Studies* fills; and where there is overlap, it is useful to have more than one perspective.

One criticism is that there is not much consistency in the aims of the chapters. For instance, some, e.g. Vibha Tripathi's chapter on the OCP and PGW 'cultures', are summaries of what is known about a period or topic. Others do not deal with the basic evidence at any great length; for instance, Mate's (very good) chapter on medieval archaeology is more concerned to show why the medieval is presently marginalized and to present a 'road map' for those wishing to take it up. The amount of space given also produces variable results: Greg Possehl's chapter on the Indus Civilization is a well-compressed summary, but at 11 pages is smaller than his article on the Early Harappans (17 pp.). Dhavalikar's chapter of 32 pages sets out to achieve the impossible task of covering 'historical archaeology' from Gangetic urbanization to the onset of 'Indian feudalism' a thousand years later. The result is that the Early Historic and issues such as urbanization and the integration of textual data are not adequately covered. This, in addition to the focus of most topical chapters, means it is effectively a book on prehistory. (Sadly, although Vol. IV of *Retrospect* has some good papers on the Early Historic, including Ray's on maritime archaeology and Mangalam's on numismatics, the 'period' does not get the treatment it deserves from either project.)

Where appropriate space is given, however, the articles are usually of a good standard, and useful for teaching. There are two excellent papers on the Palaeolithic. Dennell briefly reviews the history of Palaeolithic studies in India, the reasons for the country's marginalization in studies of 'world prehistory' and the need for more accurate dating than has hitherto been the case; and Pappu gives a very thorough account of the Lower Palaeolithic, including environment, tool production and subsistence and settlement patterns—the bibliography is also very useful. Pal's chapter on the Mesolithic is a good introduction, though restricted to the Gangetic valley. For the Middle and Upper Palaeolithic students will need to turn to the Settar and Korisettar.

An unfortunate lacuna is the lack of coverage of the Neolithic, a field in which there is an active tradition of research. The only article covering the

period is that of Paddayya, on ashmounds in the southern Deccan, basically an excavation report for the site of Budihal. Broader coverage of the Neolithic is to be found in two chapters of the *Retrospect*.

Posschl delineates the Early Harappan cultures and presents his ideas on the transition to the Mature Harappan. Sonawane gives a brief review of regional evidence for the Late Harappan and stresses continuities with the Mature phase; perhaps more of the basic evidence for the Late Harappan cultures would have been appropriate. Shinde's piece on the Deccan Chalcolithic is an excellent summary by one of the most important figures in the field, and stresses both the cultural unity of this phase and the connection in its origins with the southern-most Harappans. It is supplemented by a useful list of fourteenth-century dates from Chalcolithic sites. Tripathi's 'Protohistoric cultures of the Ganga valley' covers both the ochre-coloured pottery and painted grey ware 'cultures' and complements her article in Settar and Korisettar on early iron use in India. It is also particularly useful as an update of her book on the PGW published in 1976. However, the extent to which there is a connection between material and ethnolinguistic cultures, as she (and to some extent Shinde) argues remains problematic. It is such an important issue in Indian archaeology that it deserved a chapter in a book such as this.

The thematic chapters are more than just an add-on to the chronological section, making up over 40 per cent of the book. The first five, taken together, form a very good introduction to scientific methods in Indian archaeology, though students should also look at Vol. III of *Retrospect*. (Should both books have had an article on the Indian monsoon with the same co-author?) There is also a chapter by Sonawane on rock art, (which ironically criticizes the lack of scientific method in rock art studies); it is worth reading in conjunction with Bednarik's article in Settar and Korisettar.

It is to be hoped that both works will instil in students a sense of South Asian archaeology as a vigorous and developing field. Some chapters in the volume under review do this more successfully than others.

ROBERT HARDING

ROMILA THAPAR:

*Early India (From the Origins to AD 1300).*

556 pp. London: Penguin, 2002. £30.

*Early India* is a 'revision' of a book composed some forty years ago by the same author. At the junior age of 35, Romila Thapar, not long finished her PhD at SOAS (under the direction of A.L. Basham) published a comprehensive history of the subcontinent to 1526, entitled *A History of India 1* (London: Penguin, 1966), which was issued along with a companion volume by Percival Spear, *A History of India 2* (London: Penguin, 1965). Thapar's book quickly became the most succinct overview of the field, and unlike the master tome of her own supervisor, A.L. Basham's *The Wonder that Was India*, sought to introduce India in a specifically historical framework. As the first widely received survey of early Indian history in the Western world in the post-war era, Thapar's book made three seminal contributions. First, it integrated the newly established fields of social and cultural history into its narrative. Departing from the dynastic histories of the imperialist and nationalist traditions, Thapar turned to the newly emergent field of social history for inspiration. She

drew considerably on Marxist approaches, which had recently gained currency in the field, but differed from them principally through a more open-ended (though arguably less coherent) handling of archaeological, anthropological and linguistic evidence. Thapar's book also represented one of the first survey attempts to integrate culture and religion with social and historical processes. Once again, Thapar was often inspired by Marxist and anthropological approaches, but was hardly bound by them. Second, *A History of India 1* remained among the first surveys available to Western audiences to cross the divide separating 'ancient' and 'medieval' India in a self-conscious and critical manner. Thapar pointed out the problems of the existing schemes of periodization and resisted the temptations of religious or communally defined epochs. Third, and perhaps most importantly, it explicitly foregrounded issues such as evidence, methodology and approach, beginning with a history of approaches to early India—all with the specific goal of creating a critical awareness of the problems of writing the history of early India. In light of these contributions, the book became a watershed. It demonstrated to the Western reading public that it was possible to understand early India—despite the perennial exoticism which surrounded it—with the same tools and principles of enquiry used by historians in more familiar contexts. It not only remained the single most usable survey of Indian history to 1526 for nearly forty years after its publication, but contributed more than any other publication to putting early India 'on the map' of the discipline.

By the end of the 1990s, however, sufficient new evidence had come to light and new approaches and debates taken place to warrant a major revision of *A History of India 1*. The result is *Early India (From Origins to AD 1300)*. It is worth noting that specific content aside, what makes this book interesting and perhaps somewhat unusual for the historian is that it marks an opportunity, rarely achieved, for the historian herself to reflect upon and rewrite an important contribution to the field in light of a career's experience. Having said this, it is also striking, as one reads the earlier portions of this book, just how much the author herself has been responsible, both directly through her own research, and indirectly through her influence and the work of her students, for shaping its course. If the first edition was an exploratory foray into a fledgling field, *Early India* has a far richer and varied historiographical sedimentation beneath it.

One effect of the expansion of studies on early India since the 1960s is that it was deemed no longer possible to include the Delhi Sultanate and the empire of Vijayanagara (thirteenth–sixteenth centuries) within the confines of the book. Penguin has now commissioned a work on this 'middle period' (1300–1800) which will presumably accompany a revision of the final volume to include the history of the subcontinent since independence. Despite this reversion to the tripartite periodization, *Early India* is substantially larger than its predecessor, and is supplemented with a more refined chronology, an expanded battery of maps, and an updated bibliography for each chapter. One of the more salubrious outcomes of the expanded space of the book comes in its first three chapters. It begins with an excellent, if brief, introduction to the evolution of methods in the field—explaining the importance of disciplines like archaeology, anthropology and linguistics for the writing of early Indian history—and is followed by a history of 'perceptions' of early India, including discussions of Orientalism, nationalism, Marxism and Hindutva. The second chapter explains several foundational themes and concepts in the interpretation of Indian history, including geography, climate, ecotypes, urbanism and social formations. In many ways, these chapters are the most impressive of the

book, for they capture Thapar's career-long preoccupation with the problem of history writing as such and reveal a measured wisdom nothing short of brilliance. For students, they perform the invaluable service of presenting early Indian history not as a luminous essence, but instead as a field of knowledge and interpretation.

The remaining eleven chapters present a substantive revision in light of specific advances in various sub-fields. Some historiographical concerns which were relatively absent in the first volume, like gender and women's history, now form an important thread through the narrative. The discussion of women and early Buddhism is particularly insightful. Notable in the early chapters is a shift in emphasis from the idea of 'Aryan impact' toward a *longue durée* interpretation of social, political and economic development in the Gangetic plains from 1500 BCE, which culminated in the rise of cities, states and empires. Here Thapar draws on historiography largely inspired by her own work on this period, which signalled a definitive shift away from older culturally or politically triumphalist narratives to synthetic processual models which drew on both texts and archaeology. Her treatment of the structure of the Mauryan empire departs significantly from that of the earlier edition, based mostly on a reappraisal of her earlier work in the 1980s, when she argued that the Mauryan empire should not be conceived as a uniformly administered bureaucratic state, but instead as a metropolitan hub variously articulated with outlying 'core' and 'peripheral' regions. Likewise, the chapters on post-Mauryan India no longer frame themselves against a putative narrative of political decline and fragmentation, but instead on long-term economic and social developments inaugurated by Mauryan society. The integration of religious, economic, social and political narratives in these chapters during this very complex but highly interesting period of Indian history is impressive. The wider Gupta ecumene is presented not as a 'classicist revival', but as a time of transition in which patterns were set which would transform north Indian society profoundly in the coming centuries.

In the years since the publication of the first edition, post-Gupta India, often designated 'early medieval' by historians, has in many ways had a more controversial historiography in comparison to earlier periods, one to which Thapar has contributed only occasionally. Surely one of the more challenging tasks in revising this part of the history (which retains its basic north/south structure) was taking stock of the vigorous and protracted (if inconclusive) debates around the concepts of 'state', 'state formation' and 'mode of production' which dominated the journals and monographs in the field between the 1960s and 1980s. Presenting this material to the novice is a formidable task indeed, but Thapar effectively conveys the basic positions in these debates—Marxist/feudalist, segmentary, and integrative 'processual'—as well as giving a sense of what is at stake in such controversies. In this task Thapar is both balanced and judicious. In the case of south India, Thapar is critical of Stein's segmentary model for the Chola state because of its dubious distinction between 'ritual' and 'real' sovereignties, but at the same time feels that feudalist interpretations require 'further investigation'. In treating north India, she suggests that both feudalist and integrative models may be helpful in different ways for understanding the evidence. She concludes with a plea for greater appreciation of historical variation across time and space, a point often forgotten in the enthusiasm for formulating models which has animated much early medieval historiography. What is notable in these chapters is not simply that Thapar is able to present to the reader complex problems of interpretation

in a relatively straightforward manner, but also, and perhaps more importantly, is able to convey a sense of the texture and detail of the evidence upon which historical controversies have been built. Such a combination, no mean achievement, is testament to her skill as a historian.

Historians of particular sub-fields or schools will inevitably have their lists of grievances and disagreements with interpretations in this book. While many of these may no doubt be valid, in the main they should give little cause for concern. *Early India*, like its predecessor, has not been written as a partisan or exemplar of any single historiographical position—save its unflinching advocacy of the social history perspective, which in the last twenty years has become the standard approach of the field. Beyond this, Thapar always strives towards historiographical inclusion and synthesis. While *Early India* could be said to suffer from the sort of occasional theoretical inconsistencies which may trouble any work of synthesis, it can also be argued that this is its most valuable feature, one that will ensure that it remains the standard for some time to come. Its delicate balance of narrative and reflection, of historical evidence and historical approaches, means that *Early India* is able to tell us not only of history, but of how historians have understood it.

DAUD ALI

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CENTRAL AND INNER ASIA

GRIGORIJ M. BONGARD-LEVIN, ROLAND LARDINOIS and  
ALEKSIJ VIGASIN (eds):

*Correspondances Orientalistes entre Paris et Saint-Pétersbourg  
(1887–1935).*

(Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.)

303 pp. Paris: Diffusion de Boccard, 2002.

The book under review is the outcome of a collaborative project between members of the Russian Academy of Sciences and their colleagues at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. It reproduces a corpus of professional correspondence chiefly between the French Indologist Sylvain Lévi and his Russian contemporary, Sergej F. Ol'denburg, from St Petersburg.

*Correspondances Orientalistes* is the second of three recent publications devoted to the correspondence between leading Orientalists of the early twentieth century. The first was Ferdinand Lessing's letters to Sven Hedin (*Ferdinand Lessing (1882–1961): Sinologe, Mongolist und Kenner des Lamaismus, Materialien zu Leben und Werk, mit dem Briefwechsel mit Sven Hedin*, Osnabrück: Zeller Verlag, 2000). A year later, Hartmut Walravens published 114 letters between the German scholar W.A. Unkrig, the Sinologist Herbert Franke and the Tibet explorer Sven Hedin (*W.A. Unkrig (1883–1956) Korrespondenz mit Herbert Franke und Sven Hedin: Briefwechsel über Tibet, die Mongolei und China* (Asien- und Afrika-Studien 15 der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2003).

*Correspondances Orientalistes* differs from these in one important respect. In addition to the letters of Lévi and Ol'denburg, it contains letters sent by fellow Orientalists from the Russian Academy of Sciences (St Petersburg branch) and Oriental research centres in Paris. In other words, it is not

primarily a collection of the letters of two individuals, but constitutes the official correspondence between staff at the Russian Academy of Sciences and their colleagues at the Collège de France, Musée Guimet, École Pratique des Hautes Études, etc. The letters' authors rank among the finest Indological and Sinological scholars of the day, including, on the Russian side, Sergej F. Ol'denburg, Fedor I. Šcerbastskoj, Vasilij M. Alekseev, Vasilij V. Radlov and Fridrih A. Rozenberg; the French tradition is represented by Sylvain Lévi, Paul Pelliot, Emile Senart and Alfred Foucher. It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of letters exchanged between Paris and St Petersburg since a substantial proportion fell victim to the political turmoil that overshadowed early twentieth-century Europe. For example, fearing persecution at the hands of Stalin, Ol'denburg found himself forced to destroy his private collection just hours before the arrival of the secret police in October 1929. But the French records also suffered during this period. In 1941, because of his leading role in the Alliance israélite universelle, Lévi's private papers were taken from his flat in Paris to Berlin. Four years later the Red Army in turn confiscated his collection and shipped it to Moscow where it was kept at the Military Archives of the Russian State (Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Voennyj Arhiv) until its return to the Lévi family in 2000.

The majority of the surviving letters stem from Lévi's papers kept until recently in Moscow; others found their way into the Archives nationales de France, Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Archives du Collège de France, the Fond Pelliot kept at the Musée Guimet and Foucher collection at the Société asiatique (Paris). On the Russian side, the letters received by Šcerbastskoj, Alekseev, Radlov and Rozenberg are kept mostly in St Petersburg at the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Archive of the Institute for the History of Material Culture. (A list of public and private repositories where the letters are currently housed is given on pages 69–71.)

Broadly speaking, the book's content falls into two parts: first, there is Lardinois' detailed and well-crafted introductory essay ('Les pèlerins du savoir', pp. 9–62) describing the historical, professional and personal circumstances in which the letters were composed. It contains a wealth of interesting background information about the careers and research interests of their authors and offers a glimpse of the issues that propelled French and Russian Indological and Central Asian research during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For example, Lardinois gives a good account of the events that surrounded the exploration of the Central Asian Buddhist sites between 1901 and 1915 (pp. 25–39), including subsequent research into the items recovered from the desert sands, analysing in particular the contributions of Ol'denburg and Pelliot who played leading roles in the Russian (1909–10, 1914–15) and French (1906–09) expeditions. Similarly interesting is Lardinois' summary of several letters that sketches Lévi's and Ol'denburg's travel across Europe, Russia, India and the Far East, since they abound with astute observations about the prevailing political climates in a period that saw so much change (pp. 39–56). Readers less familiar with the French and Russian Orientalist traditions will also appreciate Lardinois' biographical synopses, mapping out the personal background, academic training and principal achievements of the key members of the Franco-Russian collaboration (Lévi: pp. 15–21; Ol'denburg, pp. 21–4; Senart: pp. 27–8; Foucher: pp. 28–9; Pelliot, pp. 30–32; Šcerbastskoj, pp. 34–7).

Lardinois closes his essay with an account of the academic initiatives and political factors that shaped Franco-Russian collaboration between 1917 and 1940 (pp. 48–62). On the one hand, Paris and St Petersburg managed to

launch a number of promising collaborative projects, driven by the vision of a handful of scholars with ready access to the political elite and central funds. On the other, many of their initiatives were affected by sudden political change which led to delays, withdrawal of funding at short notice and sometimes cancellation. The early years of the Russian Revolution were accompanied by much turmoil and economic hardship. But French scholarship too had its share of difficulties, as exemplified by Lévi's efforts to establish a post in Indology at Strasbourg University (pp. 45–8). Finally, following the treaty of Versailles, Europe found itself in a politically precarious situation with sustained economic problems. In fact, it is astonishing just how much work was done: scholars routinely engaged in research in uncharted territory, books and journals were published, conferences convened, projects launched and completed, academic exchange agreements ratified and implemented. In short, scholarly activity not only survived but even flourished in those years, in Russia, France and much of Europe.

In the Franco-Russian arena, many of these initiatives were driven by Lévi and Ol'denburg. Inspired by their shared passion for Indological research and a close friendship, they worked tirelessly to establish and develop collaborative ties between the Orientalist research communities of Paris and St Petersburg. In the early years, many of their projects included colleagues from other European countries (most notably Great Britain and Germany). The pan-European board of the 'International Association for the Exploration of the History, Archaeology, Linguistics and Ethnography of Central Asia and the Far East' (founded in 1902 on the initiative of Ol'denburg and Radlov) with the remit to co-ordinate fieldwork in ancient oasis towns of Central Asia is a good example. The outbreak of Austro-German hostilities in 1914, and again in the late 1930s, caused great concern in Paris and led eventually to the exclusion of German, Italian and Austrian participation (p. 44). Even though Franco-Russian academic relations thrived as a result, their alliance was relatively short-lived and collapsed in 1940 following the partition of Poland (pp. 60–62).

In addition to their scholarly pursuits, both Lévi and Ol'denburg also participated in politics. Lévi was a leading member of the Alliance israélite universelle and enjoyed good contacts (largely through Emile Senart) to the French government; Ol'denburg benefited from his articulate support of the Russian Revolution. Thus privileged, both had little difficulty in attracting political support and funding for their work.

But let us now turn to the letters themselves. These constitute the main body of *Correspondances Orientalistes* (pp. 77–275). They are ordered according to chronology and author (p. 63). The first letter is a brief note Lévi wrote to Ol'denburg in October 1887, shortly after their initial meeting in Paris. The last is a scholarly communication between Lévi and Šcerbastskoj in June 1935 in which the former enquires about the progress of Šcerbastskoj's translation of the *Madhyāntavibhāga* (only chapter 1 was ever published), access to the Petrovski manuscript and the background of a promising young scholar called Andrey Vostrikov (pp. 189–90). Most letters were written in the 1890s and between 1910 and 1930 when Franco-Russian collaboration was most active. Of the 130 letters, Lévi wrote 75 (all but 19 to Ol'denburg). Ol'denburg himself received a total of 94 letters (54 from Lévi, the rest from Pelliot, Senart and Foucher). The content of virtually all letters is professional, their tone friendly but decorous. Above all, they speak of the authors' research interests, recent fieldwork experience, publications, collaborative initiatives, book acquisitions and travel arrangements. All references to private matters have been removed by the editors (p. 63).

Their content and historical setting render the letters a valuable source in identifying the forces that shaped modern Oriental studies in Europe. They record the efforts of an elite group of scholars struggling to direct, organize and advance research in the yet uncharted civilizations of India, China and Central Asia. While France and Russia were certainly not alone in this quest, they produced and supported many outstanding scholars prepared to devote their life to this task. More importantly perhaps, the letters are a record of what was probably the first co-ordinated international collaboration in the history of Oriental research.

One cannot help but be impressed by the editorial apparatus that accompanies the letters. The letters are annotated by a total of 548 footnotes designed to contextualize and update the information they contain. The notes provide full publication details (including reprint information, if applicable) of all the books and articles cited in the letters (completed or in progress); they include short biographical digests (including principal publications and university appointments) of all the scholars that appear in the correspondence; they complement accounts of research initiatives launched during the lifetime of Lévi and Ol'denburg with information about their progress since then. Finally, the footnotes link the research agendas which Lévi, Ol'denburg and their colleagues drafted almost 100 years ago with current scholarly thinking. In short, they are a veritable treasure trove that abounds with fascinating background information to the work and times of Lévi, Ol'denburg and their contemporaries.

In sum, *Correspondances Orientalistes* is a well-conceived and extremely competently executed publication: it traces the personalities and research agendas that shaped early Franco-Russian scholarly collaboration, it throws light on the events that influenced oriental studies in late nineteenth/early twentieth-century Europe, it contextualizes the exploration of the famous Buddhist sites of Central Asia and, in a more personal sense, offers a glimpse into the personal circumstances of the individuals that pioneered modern Oriental scholarship. Many of the achievements accomplished during that period withstood the test of time and are just as breath-taking today as they were 100 years ago. *Correspondances Orientalistes* is a timely reminder of just how much we owe to our predecessors for their vision, outstanding competence and sheer hard work.

ULRICH PAGEL

GEORGE LANE:

*Genghis Khan and Mongol Rule.*

(Greenwood Guides to Historic Events of the Medieval World.)

xlvi, 225 pp. Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 2004.

The book under review here falls somewhere between a textbook and an introduction for the general reader (probably closer to the former). It does an admirable job in striking the right balance between detail, choice anecdote, grand picture and interpretation, and includes a well-chosen selection of translated passages from contemporary sources. Students and non-specialists will find the style of the volume enjoyable and the contents informative. Scholars

interested in the period, as well as experts, will see it as a very useful textbook, but also will discover some fresh interpretations and insights.

The book is divided into three sections. The first is a relatively straightforward survey of the history of the Mongol empire: an overview of pre-Mongol steppe society and history; the rise of Temüjin, the future Chinggis Khan; the establishment of the empire and the initial conquests on the steppe, in China and the Islamic world; Mongol rule in China (the Yuan dynasty); the Ilkhanate, i.e. the Mongol dynasty in Iran (and, I might add, the surrounding countries); and considerations of the legacy of the Mongols in these two areas. This section also includes some reflections on parallels between Mongol history in the Middle East and contemporary events in the region (a chapter which perhaps was out of place in this work, although it contained some interesting ideas).

The second section is an interesting innovation for this type of survey: a series of sixteen short biographies of important personalities in the history of the Mongol empire, with a definite emphasis on the Ilkhanate (reflecting the author's own interests). These short treatments are not limited to Mongols, but extend also to various civilians who served them in different capacities, as well as representative contemporary religious figures. The Juwaynī brothers, Naṣīr al-Dīn Tūsī, Rashīd al-Dīn and Arghun Aqa are some of the important individuals treated here. This approach will provide a different focus for students, and permit a more in-depth discussion of the role of the bureaucrats and intellectuals, as well as some of the rulers they served.

Finally, the third section is a judicious selection of translated passages from various primary sources, mostly contemporary, for the history of the Mongols, again with a clear bias to south-west Asia. This is a real boon for teachers, not the least since the author has gone beyond the usual suspects ('Aṭā-Malik Juwaynī, Rashīd al-Dīn and the Franciscan friars who travelled to Mongolia in the 1240 and 1250s), and provided interesting snippets by various Armenian writers, as well as lesser-known Persian sources, such as the *Ṣafarnāmah* by Ḥamdallāh Mustawfī (translated by L.J. Ward in an unpublished 1983 PhD dissertation from Manchester). One could quibble about this or that tidbit that was not included, but on the whole this is a nice selection which will prove very useful for teaching purposes. This section is followed by an excellent annotated bibliography, including a list of translations of sources, the most extensive in English of which I am aware.

In short, Lane has succeeded quite well in writing a volume within the parameters that he (and the series editor) established. With that, I wish to note several reservations. First, a book of this type and scope should have included chapters, even brief ones, on the Mongols in east Europe and Russia, on one the hand and Central Asia on the other. The short biography on Batu is not sufficient for the former, and that of Qaidu for the latter. These are both areas of major importance for the history of the Mongols, and this period was significant for the regions themselves hundreds of years after the initial Mongol conquest. If there is a second edition to this work, perhaps these lacunae can be rectified.

There is also a point of interpretation with which I wish to take issue. It is suggested in the book that the main reason that the Great Khan Möngke sent his brother Hülegü to the Middle East in the early 1250s was the threat of the Assassins (i.e. the Nizārī Ismailis), as conveyed by the Qadi of Qazwīn, as well as perceived at the Mongol court at Qaraqorum. This may have well have been a compelling reason for the organization of this campaign, although perhaps

our main source for this story, Juwaynī, can also be accused of biased and tendentious writing. His presentation of the eradication of the Assassins can be seen as a way of justifying Hülegü's campaign and later actions (as well as drawing attention away from the conquest of Baghdad and the eradication of the Caliphate). In any event, other reasons—some more cogent—also present themselves: Mongol imperial ideology, the Mongol move westwards across Iran into Anatolia, and probes into Syria and upper Mesopotamia which preceded Hülegü's arrival in the area, and Möngke's desire to strengthen the Toluids at the expense of the Jochids of the Golden Horde (a convincing suggestion made by T. Allsen in his *Mongol Imperialism* (1987)). Finally there is the whole issue of whether Hülegü was exceeding his brief by establishing a dynasty in Iran and the surrounding countries, a question raised by Peter Jackson in his famous article 'The dissolution of the Mongol empire' (*Central Asiatic Journal*, 32, 1978, 186–244). Readers—be they student or expert—should get a richer treatment of this important topic.

A second matter is that of the nature of the early Ilkhanid state. Lane has provided here a concise summary of the main arguments of his recent book *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth Century Iran* (London, 2003), which has presented a convincing case for looking at the first decades of Ilkhanid rule in a more positive light than has usually hitherto been presented. Certainly, he is correct in suggesting that we have been led astray by the impression created by the atrocities committed by the Mongols in their first campaign in the region (1219–23), as well the sorry state of the country described by Rashīd al-Dīn at the end of the thirteenth century (thus justifying the policies of his patron, Ghazan, carried out by himself). The author is surely right when he shows that the reign of Hülegü and his son Abagha (1265–82) was one of relative stability and even prosperity. At the same time, perhaps Lane has gone a little too far in painting the rosy picture of the welcome accorded to Hülegü by the rulers and people of Iran and its environs. Certainly the people of Mayyāfāriqīn, southern Iraq and Aleppo had little positive to say about the nature of Mongol conquest, and those of eastern Anatolia also may have had some reservations regarding the benefits of Mongol rule after the harsh measures carried out there in 1276–77. It is also not clear that the Sunni Muslims in Iraq and the surrounding countries accepted the eradication of the 'Abbasid caliphate with equanimity. The research of S. Heidemann (*Das Aleppiner Kalifat (AD 1261): vom Ende des Kalifates in Bagdad der Aleppo zu den Restaurationen in Kairo* (Leiden, 1994)) and my own readings in the Arabic sources from Egypt and Syria lead me to think differently.

These reservations do not detract from the value of Lane's volume as a whole. I intend to use it in my introductory lectures and courses on the Mongols, and particularly recommend the volume to teachers, as well as to all those who wish to learn about the Mongol expansion and empire, especially in the Middle East.

REUVEN AMITAI

ALAN J. K. SANDERS:

*Historical Dictionary of Mongolia.*

(Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries, 42.) lxxiii, 419 pp.

Lanham and Oxford: The Scarecrow Press, 2003. £40.

This second edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Mongolia* is able to focus on the new, emerging, Mongolia and include the names and details of people,

institutions, places and events that have been of great importance over the last decade, a formative period in Mongolia's history. While updating the entries to reflect these new developments, Alan Sanders has not neglected Mongolia's glorious past and the country's pride in its eventful history. This slim volume remains a useful reference book for the historian and general researcher, and a convenient tool for academics as well as journalists.

Alan Sanders has a solid background not only in journalism but also in academia. He worked as an editor for the BBC for five years and has been a regular contributor to the *Far Eastern Economic Review* as well as regularly writing articles and chapters for a wide range of journals, yearbooks, books, collections, and reports concerned with Mongolia. His academic credentials include a lectureship at SOAS between 1991 and 1995, a fellowship of the London Institute of Linguists, membership of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and participation in both the Anglo-Mongolian Round Table conferences and the quinquennial congresses of the International Association for Mongol Studies. He has written two other books on Mongolia and published two books on Mongolian, the spoken language.

This new edition of his *Historical Dictionary* makes a welcome and timely appearance. New interest in Mongolia has been evident in recent years and in 2004 three major studies of Chinggis Khan and Mongol rule have appeared. Unfortunately this book has a serious omission: it contains only one very inadequate map, which shows administrative districts and little more. Other maps showing geological features, historical sites, economic activity, agricultural zones, and industrial developments would have proved very useful. This and the small black and white photographs are the only shortcomings of what is otherwise an excellent reference guide to Mongolia.

Certain aspects of this compact reference tool deserve particular mention. The chronology from 1162, the birth year of Chinggis Khan, to the present (2002) is accessible and gives a Mongol-eyed view of history. The entries become progressively more detailed towards the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the new. The revised and enlarged bibliography is comprehensive and is sub-divided into eight broad categories which are further divided into more specific subject areas. It is served by an introductory commentary on the current situation in Mongol and Mongolian studies. Five appendixes detail the membership of the government and assemblies since 1992, listing members of the Great Hural or national assembly, the Little Hural or executive council, and the Democratic Party's National Advisory Council for 2001. Select biographical details of the members can be found in the main body of entries.

The main body of the book contains a comprehensive selection of entries all clearly cross-referenced. There is no attempt to categorize the dictionary entries, but this is in no way a criticism. Subjects are easily located and related entries are clearly marked in bold print. Chinggis Khan is given three pages but he is cross-referenced not only to his sons and successors but to modern history, with the attitudes of political leaders and institutions towards their famous ancestor scrutinized in a revealing summary. Chinggis Khan's birthday has only been celebrated in recent history since the death of Stalin but the official government view of the great man was negative, and sympathetic to the virulently anti-Chinggisid attitude of Soviet Russia. He was applauded for uniting the steppe tribes of Eurasia but otherwise denounced as a cruel reactionary and oppressor. The dictionary traces the rehabilitation of Chinggis

Khan with another network of cross-references to connect this particular entry with the wider scope of the book.

In the medieval period the boundaries of Mongolia were considerably larger than they are today. Simple, concise entries deal with these outlying outcrops of the empire from its glory days. The Ilkhanate of Iran receives only thirteen lines and the Yuan dynasty of China nine, though the Golden Horde of Russia is awarded a full page. Inner Mongolia has two pages devoted to its affairs and Xinjiang half a page in recognition of its scattered Mongol-speaking communities.

The potential audience for this book is reflected in the background and achievements of the author. The detailed information pertaining to Mongolia's current political, economic, industrial and social situation make it an indispensable and accessible tool for journalists, but its equally detailed data on historical and academic issues, coupled with the excellent bibliography, also make it a valuable volume for scholarly use.

GEORGE LANE

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EAST ASIA

STEPHEN ESKILDSEN:

*The Teachings and Practices of the Early Quanzhen Taoist Masters.* (SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture.) vii, 274 pp. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004. \$50.

The Quanzhen (Complete Realization) School of Taoism emerged in northern China in the twelfth century when the rule of the Northern Song-dynasty had crumbled and foreign powers held a firm grasp on the region. Adherents of Quanzhen Taoism developed a preference for life in celibate communities, which makes this branch and organization of Taoism acceptable to today's Chinese government. The White Cloud Monastery in Beijing is the leading Taoist centre for the education and the pious life of Taoists in northern China. It calls to mind the patriarch Qiu Chuji (1148–1227) who in the early thirteenth century departed to visit Chinggis Khan. The Mongol potentate wished to learn about the techniques of longevity, a reputed concern of Taoism. This event was described by A. Waley in *The Travels of an Alchemist, The Journey of the Taoist Ch'ang-ch'un from China to the Hindukush at the Summons of Chingiz Khan* (reprinted London, 1963). Any study of the historical setting for the developing Quanzhen School will consider the article by P. Demiéville, *La situation religieuse en Chine au temps de Marco Polo* (Oriente PolianoRome 1957, pp.193–236). In the work under review Eskildsen shows that such studies still have much to offer. Qiu Chuji was one of the 'Seven Realized Ones', who form, almost exclusively, the 'early Quanzhen masters' of the title of this book. They in fact founded Quanzhen Taoism in the provinces of Shandong and Shensi where they established individual affiliations or lines of transmission. Some of these affiliations still flourish today, for example, the *Longmen pai* that claims Qiu Chuji to be the ancestor patriarch.

The speciality of these Taoists was the sublimation of the way of life in order to retrieve the original transcendent quality and integrity of the heavenly life endowment. The literary collections of the Seven Realized Ones show a

preponderance of the rhetoric of Song ‘internal alchemy’ (*neidan*) that is used to describe the meditative self-cultivation these Quanzhen Taoists combined with asceticism, abandoning their social ties. On the other hand, these Taoists were keen to help people in distress. Their help was often realized by ritual means that seem to stem from the traditions of Heavenly Master Taoism. Unfortunately, the precarious relationship between those ritual practices and the meditative culture of the Quanzhen School was not a matter of great interest for the author of this book. Eskildsen discusses the following themes: ‘cultivating clarity and purity’, ‘the asceticism of the Quanzhen Masters’, ‘cultivating health and longevity’, ‘visions and other trance phenomena’, ‘the miraculous powers of the Quanzhen Masters’, ‘death and dying in early Quanzhen Taoism’, ‘the compassion of the early Quanzhen Masters’, ‘rituals in early Quanzhen Taoism’. The book ends with a conclusion, an extended bibliography, a glossary and an index.

This book focuses very much on Wang Zhe (1112–70), the founding father of Quanzhen Taoism, and looks also at other representatives of the Seven Realized Ones such as Qiu Chuji: Eskildsen also introduces a few later Taoist masters. I found, however, that the attention Eskildsen pays to this particular master rather unbalances his work. The book’s strength lies in its presentation of quite a number of translations of Quanzhen lyrics taken from the respective literary collections; for some of these we have modern editions. The reader wonders why so little use is made of reference works; Eskildsen’s translations may have profited from a reference to earlier studies of Quanzhen Taoism, some of which are listed in the bibliography. On the whole Eskildsen’s translations and thoughtful interpretations document various aspects of Quanzhen Taoism, as indicated in the titles of the chapters in this book.

Eskildsen chooses and uses some of his sources in a rather wanton way; he simply needs them to make his point. One such source is the canonical title *Chongyang zhenren jinguan yuso jue*, which is most probably a very early Quanzhen book. It contains many instructions for ‘internal alchemy’, many of which do not reappear in later Quanzhen works. Eskildsen knows that the attribution of this title to Wang Zhe is at best shaky, and the actual position of the book in Quanzhen history and learning is not yet well understood, but he still exploits the *Yuso jue* as one of his basic sources.

The lyrical works of the early Quanzhen Taoists use *neidan*-terminologies heavily. Now, should we take them at face value, in the sense of the Southern alchemical traditions, or should we understand the *neidan*-diction as a mere expression of eccentric literary erudition? Such questions, I feel, still remain to be solved. There are many intricate problems left to tackle as soon as we take a close look at the individual masters.

Hao Datong (1140–1212) was a soothsayer, Wang Chuyi (1142–1217) performed traditional Taoist rituals and exorcism, and Qiu Chuji was also much involved in Taoist rituals. Considering the career of the ritual specialist in Heavenly Master Taoism, we realize that we do not yet really understand the status and performance of these Quanzhen masters when they partook in such events.

Eskildsen tries to develop a comprehensive presentation of most demanding themes. I regret, however, that the rhetoric of this author in a way hides the character of these patriarchs, not to mention the independence and individuality of their teachings and practices. For example, much more weight could have been given to the commentator Liu Chuxuan (1147–1203) and the *Yijing*-specialist Hao Datong. In any case the numerous translations of

selected Quanzhen lyrics, all fascinating to read, constitute the most informative element of this book. The translations are certainly the major effort, for which we all have to thank Eskildsen.

FLORIAN C. REITER

JOHN MAKEHAM:

*Transmitters and Creators: Chinese Commentators and Commentaries on the Analects.*

(Harvard East Asian Monographs, 228.) xvi, 457 pp. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2003. £32.95.

The study of commentary in China has made something of a breakthrough in this new millennium, with authors such as Daniel K. Gardner and Rudolph G. Wagner already providing paperback monographs, suitable for classroom use, on a couple of China's greatest commentators. Now John Makeham has gone yet further, with a satisfyingly weighty volume that dips into the tradition of commentary on the *Analects* of Confucius at four strategic points, and reports back not only on the works themselves, but also on the intellectual environments that formed them. Since the four eras chosen cover the period of post-Han intellectual ferment preceding the penetration of the Chinese philosophical tradition by Buddhism, the sixth-century apogee of Buddhist influence, the consolidation of Neo-Confucianism, and the late imperial 'Han Learning' school, whether consciously or not Makeham has provided a rather effective survey of Chinese thought, omitting only the rather anti-scholastic Ming phase. This omission is on reflection understandable: treating the highly subjective Ming way of reading ancient texts would no doubt demand a somewhat different approach from that used throughout the rest of the book, though one day a study of what the Ming deemed to be commentary might prove revealing in its own way. The story of the *Analects* before the onset of commentary is also not outlined here in detail, since the author has done this elsewhere, but enough is said to provide a perfectly adequate background to the commentators discussed. This is, however, not a volume for the beginner, since Makeham does not eschew the bibliographical information necessary for a rounded discussion of the works involved, even if this material is largely relegated to a series of Appendixes.

To treat each of the four portions of this work fully would greatly increase the length of any review, so what follows represents a sampling of the riches that Makeham has included, rather than a full account. Students of the Han-Wei-Jin era, of the rise of Neo-Confucianism and of the mindset of late imperial China will doubtless find much of interest in his pages, but it is his treatment of the scandalously neglected world of sixth-century thought that particularly catches the eye. Indeed, the second section, providing a very handy overview of the *Lunyu yishu* of Huang Kan, will be welcomed by anyone researching medieval China, and not just the ill-fated Liang dynasty itself, under which he lived. Makeham provides a good argument for seeing Huang's text as important to an understanding of even some of the great Tang writers, suggesting (p. 167) for example that Li Ao's remarks on the sage both not having and having the same emotions as ordinary human beings may be read as a reference to the doctrine propounded in Huang's work of the sage only seeming for pedagogical purposes to react as we ourselves would. I must

confess that in attempting to read Li Ao's mind this possibility had not occurred to me, though in the context of Li's writing as a whole it still seems to me on balance more probable that the contrast implied is one between due and undue emotion.

Certainly, however, while the doctrine Makeham describes is traced by him to impeccably Chinese roots, it must for Huang Kan have fitted in very well with the arguments of some Buddhists for a purely 'Docetist' approach to the career of the historical Buddha. Even in early Buddhist translations we can find the doctrine that the Buddha only appeared to undergo his career of renunciation and enlightenment for our sakes argued quite explicitly and at some length, as a forthcoming study on notions of Buddhahood by Guang Xing will show. The conception of the 'hidden sage' who does not demonstrate his superior powers is also well exemplified in the *Liezi*, so the idea of an emotionless Confucius expediently showing emotion was very much in the air by the time Huang came to write his commentary. And whether or not would-be defenders of Confucianism several centuries later were able to think themselves into a different way of seeing the matter is assuredly no easy question to decide.

The history of Huang Kan's text too is not straightforward, and one particularly intriguing puzzle in its transmission is not covered in Makeham's bibliographical remarks, since they were written before the puzzle was pointed out in print. In an exhaustive study by Bernhard Führer, included in a volume under his own editorship entitled *Zensur: Text und Autorität in China in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2003), pp. 19–38, it is shown that the texts of the *Siku Quanshu* and of at least some of the *Zhibuzuzhai congshu* versions of Huang's work (specifically, it seems, the exemplar in the Morrison collection) were carefully censored to avoid giving offence to the Manchus. Yet more bafflingly, I note on checking the 1921 Shanghai Gushu liutongchu refurbished 'original' *Zhibuzuzhai congshu* (available to me in a Taipei: Xingzhong shuju, 1964 reprint) that there we find the uncensored version once more—and this may, one imagines, be the source of Yan Lingfeng's uncensored *Zhibuzuzhai congshu* reprint in his *Lunyu jicheng*, also referred to in my colleague's study. But whether this feature is a result of a second Republican period intervention or accurately reflects the condition of Huang's commentary when first included in the series by its originator Bao Tingbo I lack the means to discover as yet. The millennium, after all, is still young, and the study of Chinese commentary is still in its infancy, with much research remaining to be done. Makeham's volume, however, constitutes what will doubtless be seen as an important milestone on that voyage of discovery, and doubtless too will find a place on many reading lists for some time to come.

T. H. BARRETT

ROSE KERR and NIGEL WOOD:

*Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 5, *Chemistry and Chemical Technology*, part XII: *Ceramic Technology*.

918 pp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. £120.

In the history of East Asian ceramics, Chinese ceramics have played a dominant role in both production and historiography. More is written about

Chinese ceramics than those of Japan and Korea combined and this includes historical material from sources dating from as early as the eighth century AD. This wealth of material, along with Britain's historical relationship with China, has ensured that the Western student of Chinese ceramics, whether academic or potter, is well supplied with information. In recent years, however, as a result of advances in materials science and the work of scientifically minded potters, much of the literature on Chinese ceramics has focused on technology. Frustratingly, this information has been less than comprehensive, with individual studies of specific types of wares or aspects of production, such as clays or glazes, dominating the field. These narrowly focused studies have made the need for a comprehensive history of Chinese ceramic technology all the more important, and it is fitting that the first such attempt should be made by the editors of the latest volume of the Needham series on Science and Civilisation in China, *Ceramic Technology*.

In over 900 pages, the book covers the history of ceramic production in China from the Neolithic period to the twenty-first century, with an emphasis on technology. This vast undertaking has been organized into seven themes ranging from clays to glazes, manufacturing methods, kilns, decoration and influences or transfer. The book also includes, rather gratifyingly, art historical and contextual information which aids the interpretation and understanding of what, for non-specialists, can be a very woolly subject. The main editor of the book is Rose Kerr, a sinologist and curator whose knowledge of the Chinese language has facilitated the inclusion of short essays on the literature of Chinese ceramics both historical and modern, as well as an extensive bibliography of books and articles in Chinese and Japanese before 1912, and a further one of references since 1912. The text throughout the book also includes Chinese characters, which is just as well because the dreaded Needham romanization has been applied here, making the book difficult to follow if one is not conversant with this rather unique approach to Chinese names.

Much of the technical information was provided by Kerr's co-author, Nigel Wood, who is both a potter and a scientist of some renown in the field. There is therefore enough information here to satisfy the most demanding potter as well as historians, who will also appreciate the unprecedented colour photographs which greatly enhance the presentation of this book. Many of the photographs were taken by the authors at kiln sites in China and they are accompanied by very comprehensive and up-to-date information about these sites which further makes this book a useful reference for archaeologists and those interested in the history of ceramic archaeology in China. Here, for example, are the names and locations of key sites as well as the many Chinese archaeologists whose work has transformed our perceptions and appreciation of ceramic production in China. The dates of excavations for almost all the primary kiln sites known today are included. In order to find these sites in the index, however, the reader will need to be familiar with the unique Needham spelling for the site. For example, to find Guantai, the primary kiln site for the production of Cizhou ware, one must look under *Kuan-thai* or *Tzhu-chou*.

The authors of this volume do not concentrate solely on Chinese ceramics in China. Somewhat surprisingly, they have managed to include an entire section on what they call 'Transfer', or 'China's technology transfer to the world and the significance of Chinese ceramics in the context of world ceramic technology'. This amounts to discussions of the trade in Chinese ceramics from its earliest occurrence in the Han dynasty to the impact of this trade both

within China and without. In technology terms, comparisons are made with European ceramics, such as Meissen porcelain and Wedgwood Jasper, as well as the influence of Chinese ceramic technology in East Asia. Finally, there is even a discussion of contemporary Chinese ceramic technology and its applications in both the scientific and domestic arenas.

In spite of the comprehensive approach there are some omissions that readers might find frustrating. For example, there is almost no discussion of what are commonly known as 'temmoku' glazes, or the Jian wares in which they are found in China. There is also a bias towards porcelain, but the authors have acknowledged this and noted that the main porcelain producing site in China, Jingdezhen in Jiangxi province, is also the best documented site in Chinese history so the reader benefits from the authors' focus on this ware. In general, however, one can find information about almost every aspect of Chinese ceramics with well-chosen, cogent references to follow up. The book is well organized so that even collectors who use traditional names for ceramic wares will be able to find their favourites (albeit with unusual spellings) and perhaps appreciate to an even greater extent just how advanced these wares are in the context of world ceramic history.

In its breadth and depth of coverage this book is unprecedented in the literature on East Asian ceramics. It is also a very suitable addition to the Needham series, which continues both to record and advance our knowledge of Chinese science and civilization.

STACEY PIERSON

CHARLES R. STONE:

*The Fountainhead of Chinese Erotica: The Lord of Perfect Satisfaction (Ruyijun zhuan), with a Translation and Critical Edition.*

viii, 271 pp. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003.

This is a well researched and exemplary close reading of the novella *Ruyijun zhuan* (The Lord of Perfect Satisfaction), written in classical Chinese, (although the Empress breaks into vernacular Chinese occasionally when she reaches a sexual climax), and argued to be written by Huang Xun in the early sixteenth century. The novella relates the story of Empress Wu Zetian (624–705) and her many lovers, including a monk, a doctor, two brothers, and Xue Aocao (Filthy Xue), Lord of Perfect Satisfaction, whose penis could carry a peck of grain, harking back to the libertine Lao Ai (d. 238 BC) who could hang the wheel of a cart on his erect member. All the lovers are historical figures, with the exception of Xue Aocao, who was probably an invention of the author.

Part 1 consists of nine chapters and explores: pornography and the West; precursors of the work; desire in the Ming Dynasty; authorship; speculation about contemporary events; sources; the preface, postscript and colophon; later works; and the moral. Part 2 presents an annotated translation of a high standard, and also gives a critical edition of the Chinese text.

The study argues that the work is not pornography but erotic fiction and gives a number of reasons for this. The work may contain scenes that elicit an erotic response from the reader, but it has too much history. There is too much moral remonstrance, for example the scene where Xue Aocao proceeds to cut

off his penis to persuade the empress to restore the crown prince. The plot is too complicated, there are too many characters, and there is no crescendo effect. And most importantly, the work 'interrupts even the most explicit sexual descriptions with ironic references and odd observations that almost always detract from the erotic ambiance' (p. 23). The author further supports this argument by pointing out that the bulk of the *Ruyijun zhuan* was copied verbatim into the Qing dynasty novel *Nongqing kuaishi*, but in the latter, 'dissonant references to the historical record are deleted; references to the Confucian classics are excised; and inappropriate references that detract from the portrayal of sex are cut', (p. 6), thus making this more of a pornographic novel.

There is a valuable discussion on precursors of this combination of love, politics, history and morals in the *Shijing*, *fu* poetry and early erotic stories, and the author points out that while early Daoist sex manuals argue for a dispassionate engagement in sexual cultivation, there is no hope of immortality for the characters in our novella, since they have no self-control, and the work can be seen as a parody of these early Daoist writings.

The author's discussion of desire in the Ming Dynasty and of the Great Ritual Debate is based on the supposition that the work was probably written in the early sixteenth century. He argues that the author was quite possibly Huang Xun who held several government positions during the Jiajing reign period (1522–67), based on Huang's essay on the *Ruyijun chuan*, his 'Ballad to the Little Barbarian', which refers to Empress Wu's lovers, and some of his other writings. There is an interesting discussion on desire in the Ming Dynasty, focusing on Wang Yangming's brand of Neo-Confucianism, the pursuit of self-cultivation, an examination of the consequences of moral action, and the interpretation of individual desire. The author also places the *Ruyijun zhuan* in the context of the four masterworks of the Ming novel and mid-sixteenth-century short stories, and since it details the destructive consequences that Wang Yangming's contemporaries feared would be produced by his radically subjective philosophy, the author suggests that it can be read as a critique of the thought of Wang Yangming and his school (p. 54).

A further discussion focuses on a possible connection between the *Ruyijun chuan* and contemporary events such as the accession of Emperor Shizong and the Great Ritual Debate, arguing that although the work is not ultimately a caricature of the major personalities of the Great Ritual Debate, it can be read as an attack on 'the irregular manner in which the dispute was adjudicated' (p. 82).

Another interesting chapter explores the relationship between the *Ruyijun zhuan* and later works such as: the *Wu Zhao zhuan*, a short abridgement of the work with a preface dated 1587; the Qing period novel *Nongqing kuaishi* published in 1712; the historical novel *Sui Tang liangchao shizhuan* published in 1619; and the *Jin Ping Mei* written during the second half of the sixteenth century. Stone argues that the author of the *Jin Ping Mei* was the only one to understand and improve upon the rhetorical devices invented by the author of *Ruyijun zhuan*, while the others 'studiously ignored its most sophisticated techniques and copies only its descriptions of human sexuality' (p. 125).

The author has made a strong argument for Huang Xun's authorship, placed the novella in its historical context, analysed the rhetorical techniques in the novella including its use of historical texts, and pointed out that the history is not a pretext for telling a dirty story; but rather perhaps that the dirty story is a pretext for telling an unusual tale about history and morality

(p. 20). Those interested in Tang history and in literature in general will find this work fascinating.

ANDREW LO

SY REN QUAH:

*Gao Xingjian and Transcultural Chinese Theater.*

xi, 225 pp. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004. \$48.

Sy Ren Quah's work provides an exhaustive discussion of the dramatic productions of Chinese Nobel Laureate Gao Xingjian from the early 1980s to the present. In addition to a detailed analysis of Gao's pre- and post-exile works, Quah also offers an accurate scrutiny of the intellectual and socio-political context in which these works were produced, as well as a description of the theoretical foundations of his theatre.

The book is composed of an introduction, two main parts—each consisting of two chapters—and a conclusion. It is complemented by a glossary and a comprehensive bibliography of works by and about Gao Xingjian.

After discussing the controversy that emerged both in China and abroad after Gao was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2000, the introduction presents an overview of the playwright's life and work, anticipating some key dramatic concepts and thematic motives more thoroughly scrutinized in the following sections. Subsequently, Quah sets out the theoretical framework of his study. Given Gao's peculiar biography and the cultural issues explored in several of his plays, Quah sees his theatre 'as a cultural and intellectual sphere in which an interaction of different cultures takes place' (p. 13), proposing to read it as a transcultural entity, as a dialogue of different cultural elements. Drawing from Pavis's and Bharucha's theories of theatrical transculturalism, Quah argues that transculturalism in Gao's work emerges not only as a dialogue between China and the West (Pavis's 'interculturalism') but also as an interaction between different cultural systems—hegemonic and marginal—within China (Bharucha's 'intraculturalism'). In discussing Gao's exploration of new representational modes such as the Theatre of the Absurd and Chan Buddhism, Quah draws special attention to the centrality of form and to the ways in which it determines the delivery of content in his plays.

Part 1, 'Exploration within context', examines what Quah identifies as the first stage of Gao's experimentation, focusing on the works he produced in China in the early 1980s—*Alarm Signal*, *The Bus Stop* and *Wild Man*. Chapter 1, 'Searching for alternative aesthetics', investigates the fundamental role played by Western theatrical paradigms, primarily Brechtian drama, in the development of new modes of representation on the Chinese stage. Quah emphasizes how the Chinese dramatists' search for alternative aesthetics intervened in the formation of alternative ideologies, thus functioning as a challenge to official orthodoxy. First advocated by Huang Zuolin in the 1950s as an alternative to mainstream Stanislavskian realism, the Brechtian model deeply influenced Huang's conception of *xieyi* drama as well as Gao's early experiments with theatrical narrativity and anti-illusionistic representation. Brecht's aesthetics and his appreciation of traditional Chinese opera also encouraged Chinese dramatists to reconsider the potential of their native theatrical heritage. Traditional theatre, along with Western models such as

Brecht and Artaud, constitutes an essential component of Gao's notion of 'total theatre'.

Chapter 2, 'Exploration in action', focuses on the socio-cultural context of 1980s China and the innovations Gao accomplished in his first three plays. In examining the dialectics of form and content, Quah emphasizes the ideological significance of form in the establishment of alternative discourses, and the role of form as motif in Gao's dramaturgy. His early works are characterized by a creative appropriation of Western avant-garde techniques and native traditional styles, such as the Theatre of the Absurd in *The Bus Stop* and elements derived from Chinese sub-cultures in *Wild Man*. The notions of multi-vocality and polyphony constitute crucial theoretical concepts in this phase, and are scrutinized in the last section of the chapter.

Part 2, 'Theatre and its representation', concentrates on the second stage of Gao's experimentation, initiated by *The Other Shore* and intensified in his post-exile plays. Chapter 3, 'Space and suppositionality', discusses Gao's exploration of the potentialities of a 'liberated' theatrical space, the role of the actor and the actor-spectator relationship in such space, as well as his investigation of the concepts of dramaticality, theatricality and suppositionality. The latter, originating in Chinese dramatic aesthetics and akin to Meyerhold's 'stylization', implies that every theatrical element 'is artistically represented, subjectively imagined, and thus fundamentally unreal' (p. 105), and is closely connected to Gao's understanding of drama as game. The notion of playfulness, along with the carnivalesque nature of traditional theatre, constitutes another basic feature of his aesthetics. Quah maintains that suppositionality is not only a formal device, but is also involved in the subject of Gao's plays.

Chapter 4, 'Performance in alienated voices', examines Gao's idea of a 'tripartite of performance' and the concept of 'neutral actor', a transitional stage between the actor's real identity and his identity as character. Gao tests the flexibility offered by such three-dimensional relationships in several of his later plays, such as *The Nether City*, *Between Life and Death*, *The Nocturnal Wanderer* and *Dialogue and Rebuttal*, in which he creates dialogic contrasts by adopting different personae and different voices spoken by the neutral actor. In this manner, Quah argues, the narrative is not only a means to produce an alienation effect, but becomes 'the theme of alienation itself' (p. 137). Thematically, Gao's later plays display fewer references to the Chinese context, and scrutinize existential themes related to the universal condition of humankind such as alienation, subjectivity and the Self. Quah observes a substantial degree of emotional detachment in Gao's attitude towards his characters, thus suggesting that the alienated voice of the neutral actor 'might be perceived as that of the playwright' (p. 160).

The conclusion summarizes the most significant issues raised in the previous sections—for instance Gao's role as an intellectual, his conflicting relationship to the Chinese socio-political context and the contemplation of alternative cultures as a challenge to ideological orthodoxy—and investigates further major themes of Gao's dramaturgy, such as the conflict between the individual and the collective, the promotion of 'cold literature', as well as the motifs of fleeing, exile and solitariness, explored in works such as *Fleeing* and *August Snow*.

Overall, Quah's book is an important addition to the growing corpus of writing about Gao Xingjian. It offers stimulating insights about the playwright's dramatic and theoretical production, as well as on China's recent artistic and cultural developments, thus constituting a valuable contribution not only to the field of Chinese studies but also to Theatre studies in general.

Moreover, its straightforward style and clear exposition make it accessible to specialists and non-specialists alike.

ROSSELLA FERRARI

RICHARD CURT KRAUS:

*The Party and the Arty in China: The New Politics of Culture.* (State and Society in East Asia Series.) xi, 247 pp. Lanham/Boulder/New York/Toronto/Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004. £57 hardback, £20.95 paperback.

The political scientist Richard Kraus is already the author of two highly-regarded and focused studies on significant cultural practices in twentieth-century China. These are his books on the piano (an appropriation in the Republican period of European high culture) and on calligraphy, a practice with long historic roots in China itself. Both of these works combine a grasp of the big picture with an eye for telling detail in a manner which makes them of very great value. Now he has brought the same skills as a researcher and writer to bear on the very much wider canvas which is the totality of late twentieth-century Chinese culture. The result is a highly readable, humane and absorbing volume which it is hard to praise too highly, and which should be read by anyone interested in the nature of the changes which China has undergone since the end of the Maoist era in the 1970s.

As with the author's previous books, this volume is packed with crucial factual information which will be gratefully fallen on by many readers, whether it is the date of the first broadcast television commercial (by Shanghai TV on 18 January 1979) or a lucid exposition of the nebulous mechanisms which make up what Kraus calls 'the Chinese censorship game'. It is his central contention, argued in the introduction, that, 'Market reforms have eroded party controls over culture; this is a major political reform because it has meant the quiet surrender of Communist Party hegemony over intellectual life' (p. viii). He thus positions himself right at the beginning of his work explicitly against those who argue that China has changed economically but not politically since the death of Mao. For Kraus it is simply the case that 'No-one seems to have planned cultural reform, which followed from the political logic of other changes in China's economy' (p. 14). But the fact that it was unplanned does not mean that it has not happened, indeed its happening below the radar of a party and state apparatus which had its mind on other things is key to its significance. This is argued systematically and coherently, on the basis of wide reading and of regular fieldwork in China in the 1980s and 1990s, and it will be hard for the reader who approaches this wealth of material and example with an open mind to sustain the view that behind the façade of economic reform the political monolith is unshaken.

It is part of the book's strength that it demonstrates the monolith never to have been quite so solid as it may have appeared, even in its pomp in the 1950s and 1960s. 'Implicit in my approach', Kraus writes (p. 38) 'is a treatment of China's Party-State not as a single totalizing entity, but as a body of constituent parts'. And there is considerably more historical depth to the account given here than the sub-title of the book might suggest; far from being merely an account of the new politics of culture, it also provides what may be the most coherent account in English of the *old* politics of culture, that pertaining from

the restructuring of the field in 1949 on down to and into the chaotic but never structure-less Cultural Revolution. For example, the chapter on 'Normalizing nudity', which deals with the vexed issue of the naked and the nude in the visual arts, quite properly needs to take the argument right back into the Republican period, when it was first debated, while the discussion of the role of the artist as a 'professional' also needs to lay out the structures of the 1950s as a foil against which the developments of the 1980s and 1990s can be analysed. This means that the book has considerable value as an overview of the materialist politics of culture in China over the past fifty years, and should be taken into account by anyone revisiting the literature, visual or performing arts of the People's Republic since its inception.

The other side of this historical depth, for which it is impossible to blame the author, is in the coverage of the absolutely contemporary. Though bearing a 2004 imprint, there is a strong sense that the changes being described most fully here, and embodied in a 'new politics of culture' are those of the 1990s or even of the 1980s. Occasionally the rhetoric of the ethnographic present creeps into the writing in a way which reveals that the situation being observed is being observed some ten years ago, in an era before the mobile phone, the Shanghai Biennial and Gao Xingjian's Nobel Prize, never mind before the global box-office success of Zhang Yimou's *Hero*. Kraus's description, *a propos* the lack of sophisticated private patrons for the arts in China, of a 1989 New Year's Eve party at which 'the fast crowd of Fuzhou sipped orange drink and ate White Rabbit Candy' (p. 219) might as well be a description of an evening in the caves of Yan'an, or of a party in the Qing dynasty, so rapid has the pace of change in the field of culture been. Kraus, to his credit, goes a long way to explaining the basis from which the currently breathtaking rate of change has developed.

This is a book which marries its sure grasp of the empirical situation to an understated but effective deployment of relevant social science theory, most notably the work of Pierre Bourdieu. It does so in language which is invariably lucid and accessible, making it an excellent resource for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. It is hard to endorse too enthusiastically a book which achieves so much in such a relatively condensed form, while maintaining throughout a lucidity of exposition which will be appreciated by all who encounter it.

CRAIG CLUNAS

CHARLES BENN:

*China's Golden Age: Everyday Life in the Tang Dynasty.*

xxiv, 327 pp. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. £9.99.

No one could support the notion that the Tang dynasty could do with more publicity more strongly than the present reviewer. The unfortunate fact that China was a complex and creative society at a time in history that most readers brought up on the paradigm of British history recall only vaguely as a prelude to more significant developments after 1066 strands the Tang in a chronological limbo. By analogy, it is perceived as dim and distant. But in fact, to the reader of Chinese it lives on through its cultural products, such as its

unsurpassed poetry, with an immediacy that sometimes verges on the overwhelming. To recreate that immediacy in English, however, takes a rare combination of sound scholarship and stylistic grace. The good news apparent in this republication of a volume that first appeared somewhat obscurely a couple of years ago is that Charles Benn, whose own work on Tang religious ideology made a distinct contribution to the academic study of the age, has brought to a chosen second career of writing on the Tang for a broader readership precisely those qualities of vividness and vivacity that the task requires, while at least four further volumes in this vein are mentioned here as scheduled to appear in due course.

When more of this commendable project has reached print it may be possible to form a clearer sense of its academic value. For the moment, however, the decision not to include any footnotes indicating sources—unlike for example the earlier work on recreating the Tang of Edward Schafer, or the similar enterprise for the Song of Jacques Gernet—leaves the academic reader somewhat frustrated. A broad erudition seems to be in evidence, but little help is offered in passing it on. The bibliography is confined to reading suggestions in English, and though one would wish to take everything that precedes it on trust, it raises one or two niggling points that suggest that more indications of sources might in future be reassuring. Specifically, I do not recognize the authors Albert Weinstein, Stephen Owens and Patricia Ebery as experts on the Tang, nor do I believe either that Pan Yihong wrote a work entitled *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qachang* [sic] or that Luis Gómez entitled a recent work *Land and Bliss*. That such errors, though minor, should occur in the second edition of a book taken up—even though quite justifiably taken up—for broader distribution by a major press is also somewhat disappointing. If, however, Charles Benn manages to complete, or even go some way to completing, the great enterprise that he has now undertaken, these criticisms will no doubt appear in retrospect simply peevisish and trivial—and no one, again, will be gladder to recognize the fact than this reviewer.

T. H. BARRETT

DOUGLAS SLAYMAKER (ed.):

*Confluences: Postwar Japan and France.*

(Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies, 42.) vii, 185 pp.

Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002. \$60.

It is by now well documented that modern Japanese literature has a rich tradition of cultural interaction with France. From Nagai Kafū and Shimazaki Tōson in the Meiji period to Endō Shūsaku and beyond, Japanese writers have long found inspiration and the realization of their dreams in a 'France' both real and imagined. This edited volume from Douglas Slaymaker explores the literary, intellectual and artistic relationship between Japan and France in the postwar years, examining that relationship from the point of view of both nations in order to show how Japan and France provided each other with models 'in the process of sifting national memories of the war and postwar experience' (1). While both countries experienced their wars differently, it is clear that the crisis of national identity was similar as both nations faced the

rupture of 'before' and 'after', seeking to reconcile the goal of continuity with that of a fresh start.

The volume documents and problematizes various ways in which each nation sought new interpretations of its own cultural heritage in the experience of the other, adding much to our understanding not only of the Japanese and French experiences, but of the process of rebuilding and resolving political issues arising from any war. One thing that comes through very strongly is the necessity of 'engagement', the responsibility of the intellectual towards the wider society. As J.T. Rimer points out in his essay, this necessity is just as valid today as in the postwar era, as we too sift through models of nationalism and independence. This book will prove an interesting and timely read for anyone concerned with democracy, nationalism, and the frequently strained relationship between the two.

In terms of the balance in the volume, three of the essays speak to the postwar experience in both countries, one looks at the image of Japan in France's literary *avant-garde*, and six focus on how France has been used in Japanese intellectual endeavours. As Slaymaker states in the introduction, this may well reflect the fact that the impact of France on Japan was stronger than the reverse, an observation reiterated by not a few of the contributors. All of the essays bear out Slaymaker's observation that the national identity crisis is also, necessarily, an individual one. Kevin Doak's analysis of Endō Shūsaku, Hiroaki Satō's essay on the surrealist poets, and Watanabe Kazutami's view of Yokomitsu Riichi all demonstrate how important personal identity was in determining how best to learn from the cultural models of 'France'. This focus on the individual identity crisis also holds true for the French thinkers examined by Matt Matsuda and Jean-Philippe Mathy, as it was travel to Japan that rocked the foundations of understanding for Foucault, Barthes, Lacan and Kojève.

Katō Shūichi's experience of France looms large in the collection, from the introduction explaining his influence on Japan's postwar reception of French literature, to Nishikawa Nagao's essay on Katō's literary legacy. Katō himself contributes an essay on his postwar experience. This use of Katō as a commentator on his own work may seem overly subjective to the reader unfamiliar with the Japanese world of literary criticism, but Japanese criticism is often self-referential, giving more credence and authority to the personal experience. This tendency is evident in the other essays contributed by Japanese critics from Japan (translated for the volume by Douglas Slaymaker), as few footnotes give full bibliographic information for sources. While this may be of some concern to undergraduate readers or others unable to track down the Japanese-language sources, it is an interesting exercise in metacriticism to see the difference in critical style. There are too few essays by Japanese critics available in English translation, and it is useful on many levels to have four such essays included here.

One concern for this reviewer is the lack of definitions of terms in the book—the subtitle 'postwar Japan and France' points to the larger question of whose war we are talking about. 'The war experience of the 1940s' is the first mention of the wars in question (1) but to make the distinction, Japan's war is referred to as 'the Asia-Pacific war' (2). Specific dates are not given, assuming knowledge on the part of the reader, but a good point is made in the introduction on the problems involved in defining the 'postwar' in Japan, as Okinawa remained under Occupation until 1972. While most readers familiar with Japan will have no problem with the words 'war' or 'postwar' and what they designate, the reader unfamiliar with the Japanese experience of war, or

unfamiliar with the European theatres of the Second World War, may experience some frustration. References to the 'Vichy Syndrome' or the 1942 'Overcoming Modernity' symposium in Japan would similarly benefit from explanatory footnotes. However, while undergraduates may need some guidance and contextualization, the book will undoubtedly be extremely useful for those engaged in further research on the period.

The great strength of this volume is that its focus is not limited to the literature of prose or fiction, ranging through poetry, theatre and wider models of understanding. This is a book about intellectual systems and how thought expresses itself through the literary arts, showing how wide-ranging the impact of ideas really was at the time. Slaymaker's aim, to shatter the assumption that 'France' in postwar Japan is entirely encapsulated in the works of Ōe Kenzaburō and Abe Kōbō, has been more than fulfilled. One comes away from the book with a vivid picture of the many intellectuals working in Japan in the postwar years, eccentrics and committed activists and dandified poets alike, all writing in a fever of enthusiasm and starting up new journals, new theatres, and new universities for the next generation.

RACHAEL HUTCHINSON

MAEDA AI:

*Text and the City: Essays on Japanese Modernity.*

(Edited and with an introduction by James A. Fujii.)

xv, 392 pp. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004. \$89.95.

Maeda Ai, who unfortunately died in 1987 at the early age of 55, has exerted a great influence on many scholars of Japan based both in Japan and abroad, as attested by the list of well-known Western scholars who have undertaken to translate some of Maeda's most impressive and influential essays to produce this book. Maeda's work excited his readers because, though his studies began formally as a scholar of pre-modern Japanese literature, his intellectual curiosity and broad general knowledge led him to stretch disciplinary boundaries. He was not shy to draw on the latest intellectual currents from the West, and through his application of such theories and his exceptionally astute close-readings of literary texts, he transformed the way we have come to read modern Japanese literature. The present book accurately reflects the wide range of interests and literary texts that attracted Maeda. As denoted by the book's title, Maeda was more than anything concerned with the relationship between people and place, particularly urban space, as a means to challenge and reformulate conventional understandings of the shape and significance of the modern Japanese self. A brief review cannot possibly do more than touch on the complexity of his interests, but let me mention 'Utopia of the prisonhouse' as an example. Maeda's aim in this essay is to establish links between utopian visions and a sense of close imprisonment in modern Japan. During the course of his argument, he refers to (among other things) Piranesi's *Carceri d'invenzione*, the history of eighteenth-century European prison reform and Jeremy Bentham's invention of the 'Panopticon', Ohara Shigeoya's instrumental role in creating a modern Japanese prison system, and the design of Tokyo's Ginza 'bricktown' as a sign of Japanese modernity in the late nineteenth century. The translations seem uniformly well executed. James Fujii

has written an extensive and very useful introduction that places Maeda in his own cultural context, and sets out the main themes to be discussed in the essays. In short, Maeda is an extremely important scholar of Japanese literature and culture, and this book will hopefully do much to spread his insights into the broader academic community.

STEPHEN DODD

MICHAEL F. MARRA (ed. and trans.):

*Kuki Shūzō: A Philosopher's Poetry and Poetics.*

xi, 357 pp. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004. \$56.

It is an urbane mind whose poetic reflections dance between the menu at Prunier's in Paris, Kant's categorical imperative, and vomiting; between Bergson's conception of time, Heine's tomb, Euclid's geometry, and dalliances with *les demimondaines*. More startling, though, is that this is not the mind of a European aesthete but that of the Japanese philosopher, Kuki Shūzō (1888–1941), otherwise best known for his intriguing 1930 study of Japanese taste, *Iki no Kōzō* (The structure of 'iki'—roughly 'stylish refinement').

Contemporary interest in Kuki studies is reflected in the fact that *Iki no Kōzō* is currently available in two English translations: John Clark, *Reflections on Japanese Taste: The Structure of Iki* (Sydney, 1997); and Hiroshi Nara, *The Structure of Detachment: The Aesthetic Vision of Kuki Shūzō* (Honolulu, 2004). In *Kuki Shūzō: A Philosopher's Poetry and Poetics*, Michael F. Marra has expanded the field with translated selections of Kuki's poetry, two major essays on poetry ('The genealogy of feelings: a guide to poetry' and the posthumously published 'The metaphysics of literature'), along with thirteen shorter essays (though several are disappointingly brief ephemera).

Certainly the title of Marra's introductory essay, 'Worlds in tension', represents the curious intellectual equivocations of Kuki. But it is not only that the worlds of Japan and Europe were in tension for Kuki when he absorbed himself in living and studying in France and Germany between 1921 and 1928 (after which he returned to lecture in philosophy in Kyoto). Rather, Kuki himself appears to have been in a constant state of unresolved intellectual tension. In the short 1936 essay, 'Tradition and progressivism' (pp. 284–5), Kuki responds to the tendentious charge of his 'smelling only of the traditional [Japanese] past' (an accusation in reference to *Iki no Kōzō* which some had linked—and still do—with Japanese nationalism of the 1930s), and plays the balance of his thought between Japanese 'tradition' and Western 'progressivism'. His concluding defence is, though, truly gnomic: 'I have indeed the smell of the traditional past. My love for tradition, however, is not as faint as a scent' (p. 285).

Kuki's penchant for olfactory imagery is striking both philosophically and poetically (personally too: he confesses in his essay 'Sound and smell: the sound of contingency and the smell of possibility' that when he lived in Paris 'I sprinkled the inside of my vest with Guerlain's *Bouquet de Faunes*, since they said its fragrance was masculine' (p. 273)). And it does seem to me that in this there is a clue to his intellectual character. Metaphysically caught one way by delicacies of phenomenology (equally French and Japanese), he is caught in another by a desire for a rigid architectonic (equally German and Japanese). The central, quasi-logical diagram of *Iki no Kōzō* has always looked odd in its attempt to provide a geometry of the fragile mobility of taste. The same

diagrammatic habit looks sillier in the elaborate picture of the alleged cell-structure relations of 45 separate feelings appended to the essay on ‘The genealogy of feelings’—though the essay itself is a sensitive survey of Japanese poets included in the comprehensive *Shin Man’yōshū* (‘The new ten thousand leaves’).

The principal delight of Kuki’s own poetry (pp. 45–121) lies in the highly personal Paris poems: they are nervous, quirky, with a raw alertness to circumstance. Surprisingly, Marra (professor of Japanese literature, aesthetics and hermeneutics at the University of California, Los Angeles) offers no editorial assessment of the poetic value of these works. Their quality seems to me stifled, if revealing. As a philosopher, Kuki cannot easily relinquish conceptual commitment for affective moment—as in the poem *Scherzo 123*, where he writes ‘The heart says, /“lately it hurts!”/After a while/The soul says, /“Go back to Kant”’ (p. 91).

What is unsatisfactory about Marra’s volume is that he does not readily recognize the philosopher in Kuki: not merely the character of a philosopher, but the particular problems which a worldly philosopher of Kuki’s time might have confronted. For Marra, Kuki’s philosophy ‘contains all the major ingredients of a postmodern philosophy of difference’ (p. 17). Such fashionable badging trivializes Kuki’s thought.

There is no doubt, for instance, that Kuki was philosophically preoccupied by the difference between contingency and necessity. Unfortunately, Marra wholly misses the point of Kuki’s poem ‘Contingency’, addressed to Euclid and to his parallel axiom (pp. 51–2). What Kuki clearly knew is that this axiom (roughly, that two parallel lines will not intersect no matter how far extended) is philosophically problematic and was the subject of vital debate amongst philosophers, mathematicians and painters in Paris in the early twentieth century (for example, in terms of non-Euclidean geometry and Cubist painting). Was Euclid’s parallel axiom a contingent or a necessary truth? Marra’s discussion of the poem in his introductory essay under the sub-heading ‘Contingency’ notices nothing of this, and a footnote to the poem itself (p. 306) reads like an online biographical entry on Euclid (see too Marra’s bland footnotes on Kuki’s darting references to Monet, Debussy, *et al.*).

It is difficult to discern the principle of Marra’s selection of Kuki’s short essays (pp. 217–85). Two (‘Negishi’ and ‘Remembering Mr Okakura Kakuzō’) ought to be revealing in their references to the author of *The Book of Tea*, but are simply childhood recollections (with one uninteresting story repeated) of the friend of his mother and father. But ‘My thoughts on loanwords’ (pp. 277–84) is more tellingly illuminating of Kuki’s political equivocation between East and West than his defensive ‘Tradition and progressivism’.

The real intellectual substance of Marra’s collection lies, I judge, in Kuki’s late essay on ‘The metaphysics of literature’. Here, Kuki’s characteristic architectonic is evident—a categorization of four ‘times’ of art (in literature, poetry, music and painting)—but what sparkles through this is a brilliant aesthetic argument, with surprising contentions. While Kuki claims of literature that it is, metaphysically, ‘the most deeply human art’ (p. 214), he is philosophically adroit in measuring the claims also of painting, sculpture and music. This is a ferociously complex issue which goes as far back as the Italian Renaissance *paragone* disputes, and was revived in Paris during Kuki’s time there through the painter Robert Delaunay’s writings on simultaneity. And what is luminous in this essay is the kind of intensity Kuki can, at his analytical best, bring to aesthetic problems—a philosopher’s intensity reflected

in his poem, 'Vomiting' (p. 65): 'At times I vomit/Working alone/Sitting in a chair in my study,/Suddenly nausea comes'.

PETER LEECH

CHARLES K. ARMSTRONG:

*The North Korean Revolution, 1945–1950.*

xiii, 265 pp. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004.

\$19.95 paperback.

A number of recent studies have explored the genesis of the North Korean regime and traced the history of the North Korean state, but few have presented the data in as comprehensive and readable a fashion as Armstrong's book. Using archival materials recently made available, Armstrong gives a systematic and detailed account of the crucial period from 1945 to 1950 when the political, economic and cultural foundations of North Korea were laid. It is a dramatic story that started well before 1945 with the activities of North Korean guerrilla fighters, among them Kim Il Sung, against Japanese colonialism in eastern Manchuria and the Soviet Far East. With the liberation from Japanese colonial rule, the Soviet occupation of the northern half of the peninsula started; it ended with the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1948. The struggle between North and South for supremacy eventually led to the emergence of two separate political regimes, each pursuing a different model of reconstruction and modernization in the postcolonial period. In both parts of the country these efforts were interrupted by the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950.

Armstrong analyses the revolutionary process that transformed North Korea into a modernized, if not modern, state within a relatively short period of time. He argues that the North Korean leaders were more in control of planning and executing the country's reconstruction than were their South Korean counterparts, even though the influence of the Soviet economic and political models naturally remained strong and persuasive throughout. What gave the North Korean experiment its own character and strength, however, he sees in the fact that the transformation into a socialist regime along Marxist–Leninist lines was not only guided by strong leadership at the top but also actively supported from below. It was this combination of the military and the peasantry that provided the momentum for the at least initially successful experiment of state formation and economic rehabilitation. Moreover, Armstrong writes, Communism in North Korea became almost from the outset 'indigenized', with distinctly Korean elements worked into the system (p. 3).

Indeed, Armstrong tries to account for these Korean elements by tracing them back into the Chosŏn-dynasty past. In particular, he attributes to Neo-Confucianism such traditional values as social hierarchy, deference to elders, and gender inequality. Neo-Confucianism, however, reinforced rather than created these characteristics, which existed long before the introduction of Neo-Confucian norms. It is also questionable whether the 'total transformation of Korean society' under the Communist regime is comparable to the social transformation that took place at the beginning of the Chosŏn dynasty in the early fifteenth century (p. 244). The historical conditions of the two transformations seem too disparate to warrant a comparison. Indeed, the

North Korean version was more radical and achieved in far less time, but even in the North, despite the propagation of egalitarianism, hierarchical patterns continued to persist in social relationships. One of the most important elements of this indigenization, Armstrong states, was Korean nationalism—an issue that played little, if any, part at the beginning of the Chosŏn dynasty.

After an illuminating introduction in which the author discusses the main themes of his book, he goes on to give the reader a sweeping overview of the various stages of the revolutionary path that led to the establishment of the North Korean state. Chapter 1 discusses the Manchurian background of the early struggle against Japanese colonial suppression and the rise of Kim Il Sung as one of the principal leaders of the Korean revolution. Liberation and the new Communist order that emerged under Soviet occupation are the themes of the second chapter. Armstrong strengthens here his view that although Soviet models and leadership were vital in the formulation and execution of policies which determined the direction of North Korea's transformation after 1945, the contribution of the local Communists had far greater significance in Korea than in many of the East European countries under Soviet occupation. 'A pro-Soviet, communist-dominated state in North Korea', he writes, 'was not on Moscow's agenda at the end of World War II' (p. 41). The 'remaking' of the people is the subject of chapter 3. Land reform and the mobilization of the peasants were at the core of such remaking, followed by the 'reconstruction' of the industrial workers, the liberation of women as equal partners in the revolutionary transformation, and the mobilization of the youth. The emergence of the North Korean Workers' Party and the eventual amalgamation or suppression of the various other political groups active after 1945 is discussed in chapter 4. The subject of chapter 5 is the planned economy and industrialization efforts, whereas cultural issues such as education, literature, and cinema are discussed in chapter 6. Chapter 7 is devoted to an analysis of the surveillance and security apparatus. In chapter 8, finally, Armstrong describes the emergence of North Korea as a separate state, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, under the control not just of one party—now called the Korean Workers' Party—but also of one leader, Kim Il Sung—the Supreme Leader.

Armstrong's book makes fascinating reading throughout. It is illustrated by rarely seen photographs, but sadly lacks a Chinese-character glossary. The *North Korean Revolution* should be required reading for all students of Korea.

MARTINA DEUHLER

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#### SOUTH-EAST ASIA

VOLKER GRABOWSKY and ANDREW TURTON (eds):

*The Gold and Silver Road of Trade and Friendship: The McLeod and Richardson Diplomatic Missions to Tai States in 1837.*

Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2003.

The Golden Triangle (where Yunnan, Laos, Thailand and Burma meet) is one of the world's top two centres for the production of Class A narcotics. Rival powers, including some far away from Asia, have used the region's many Liberation Armies to further their own interests, or their own demand for primary product. Add to this three of Asia's great rivers running through

gorges a mile deep, the most extraordinary linguistic and cultural diversity, and mountain ranges arranged at random (because this is where the South-East Asian tectonic plate crashed into the Himalayas), and the result is one of the world's most romantic places. Now imagine that you are the first European ever to explore the Golden Triangle (and the more settled Middle Mekong kingdoms that surround it). If this fantasy appeals, you will certainly want to read the day-to-day travel journals of the first two Europeans to visit Chiangmai, Kengtung, the Shan States and the Tai-speaking region of Southern Yunnan.

Within the covers of Grabowsky and Turton's *Gold and Silver Road* may be found two full-length books of almost equal length. Pages 247–538 contain a couple of travel journals written in the 1830s, as they were printed in an 1869 volume of British Parliamentary Papers. Grabowsky and Turton are co-editors of this book, and have provided generous notes and an apparatus criticus. The second book provides an intellectual history of the two travel journals. Who were the authors? In what ways were they typical of their various milieus, as residents of boomtown 1830s Moulmein, as employees of the East India Company, and as educated European professional men? How were their journals received and used? Why, in 1869, were they finally published? Of this second book (consisting of pages 1–246 and 551–624) Grabowsky and Turton are co-authors. My first paragraph has reviewed the first book: from here on I review the second.

Intellectual history is scarcely an adequate description of the ground covered by the second book. Turton is an anthropologist of the Chiang Mai region, with a sideline in its diplomatic history. Grabowsky is a historian, who has written on Chiang Mai demographics and Vientiane literature. To answer the questions which the journals posed, they have had to acquire unfamiliar skills, so as to bring, for example, the sources written in Burmese to bear on the journals. Since Burma is my field of interest, I have read their chapters on Burma hypercritically. I can gleefully report that they slipped up on page 32 with the name of the Burmese king. And that they have overlooked one source buried deep within SOAS library which would have shed further light on Richardson's entries for 28 April 1837 (Henry Burney published an article in 1842, a copy of which (PP MS 18/2) is held in the D.G.E. Hall papers). But overall I must glumly admit that these amateurs in Burma's history have written the definitive work on British Burma between 1820 and 1840.

J. S. Furnivall's account of Moulmein in the 1840s was based on India Office memoranda and therefore concentrated on how colonial government evolved. Because Grabowsky and Turton have gone through all the surviving copies of the Moulmein Chronicle, they can tell us how life was lived in Moulmein: the picnics, the amateur dramatics, the class barriers and the constant threat of tropical fever. Ryuji Okudaira has told us about Richardson's pioneering contribution to the legal history of Burma. But the co-authors have been able to contextualize the legal history into the whole life. Which life is equally fascinating, if seen as part of English history: Richardson was born in Wapping in 1796 in his father's slopselling shop. Twenty-one years later, he qualified as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons: a testament to social mobility during the Napoleonic Wars. He was surgeon's mate for two East India Company round trips to Guangdong and back, then signed as surgeon with the Madras European Regiment, just before they fought their way into Burma. Richardson first set foot in Burma on 12 May 1823, and was to stay there for the rest of his life. He married a local woman, and their children were to follow him in serving the Anglo-Burmese state. When he died at the age of

forty-nine, Richardson had become the third most important person in the colony, and could confidently expect further promotion. Yet, according to his grandson, he died a Buddhist and was buried just outside the precinct of Moulmein's oldest monastery. Perhaps he was England's first Buddhist convert. Surely he was the very first British colonial officer to embrace Buddhism.

How far should we trust Richardson and Macleod's travel journals? Is their value as source material irredeemably tainted because the authors were part of the East India Company's colonial enterprise? Grabowsky and Turton urge a middle way: 'We advocate that the journals be read neither as politically neutral nor as part of a wicked plan to dominate the region' (p. xxvi). Plainly the English thought less of the Burmese than of other South-East Asians, because they had fought and beaten the Burmese. But 1830s colonial attitudes were far less aggressive than those of the 1870s. Their description of the Golden Triangle and the Middle Mekong are likely to be fairly trustworthy.

*The Gold and Silver Road* is about the borderlands between the Chinese, Tai and Burmese worlds. It takes its methods from the borderlands between biography, intellectual and colonial history, and cultural anthropology. This has required its co-authors to seek their material within five different literatures, each with its own script and language. They have done so masterfully. I have hailed it as a major contribution to Burmese history. Experts in Tai studies, in Colonial history, and in Buddhology will make similar claims. In the case of one co-author, this is the crowning achievement of a most distinguished career. From the other co-author, we look forward to more.

ANDREW HUXLEY