

A Scholarly Review of Chinese Studies
in North America

北美中国研究综述

Edited by

Haihui Zhang

Zhaohui Xue

Shuyong Jiang

Gary Lance Lugar



ASIA PAST & PRESENT
ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES, INC.

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“Chinese studies in North America has expanded so rapidly during the last half century that hardly anyone can keep up with the literature in more than one or two fields. That is what makes these essays so valuable. They give a quick explanation of what has been happening and highlight important studies. We are indebted to the authors for sharing their insights in such a handy format.”

Patricia Ebrey, University of Washington

“A valuable starting point for students seeking to understand the evolution of English-language scholarship on Chinese history.”

Madeleine Zelin, Columbia University

“*A Scholarly Review of Chinese Studies in North America*” presents twenty-one comprehensive bibliographic essays by a stellar group of Sinologists working in US academia. The essays are organized chronologically, with some focused on the history or literature of a particular period—for example, “Ming and Qing Literature”—and others centered on the scholarship in a particular discipline—for example, science, economics, linguistics and music. This volume will be extremely useful for students, perhaps especially graduate students, as introductions to the scholarly literature in their fields. The authors not only evaluate the significance of individual works, they also set those works in the larger context of scholarly and intellectual developments. Haihui Zhang has done Chinese studies a valuable service in bringing these excellent bibliographic essays together.”

Kirk A. Denton, The Ohio State University

“This collection of essays by leading scholars in literature, sociology, music, art, economics and history makes a very timely and valuable contribution to China studies. As the field has rapidly expanded and it grows increasingly difficult to peruse beyond one’s subfield and discipline, Haihui Zhang and her team have done us a tremendous favor by constructing a well-stocked, brightly illuminated one-stop shop for faculty, graduate students and even advanced undergraduates who are interested in delving into multiple field-defining debates, catching-up with recent scholarship in the humanities and social sciences, or searching for comparative insights across disciplinary boundaries.”

Neil J. Diamant, Dickinson College

“This volume will be of great value not just to graduate students working in Chinese studies but also to established China scholars and those seeking comparative perspective. Today’s researchers are intellectually indebted to the pioneers in their fields and this volume gives credit to those on whose shoulders today’s China scholars stand—whether in economics, the development of science, music, or history. It will be of great help to contemporary scholars wishing to place their research questions into the broader context.”

Maggie Maurer-Fazio, Bates College

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Nineteen of the twenty-one essays in this book were originally included in 北美中国学 - 研究概述与文献资源 (Chinese Studies in North America: Research and Resources) published in 2010 by Zhonghua Shuju 中华书局. “Studying Chinese Politics: Farewell to Revolution?” by Elizabeth J. Perry is an updated version of Professor Perry’s article that was originally published in *The China Journal* (no. 57, Jan. 2007). “US Scholarship on Modern Chinese Literature” by Edward M. Gunn was written for this volume.

Acknowledgements

Over the past few decades, the field of Chinese studies in North America has experienced very rapid growth. The current areas of active research have extended beyond the traditional subdivisions of sinology into a rich variety of new methodological approaches and new subdisciplines. This collection of essays surveying the state of Chinese studies in North America was originally written in 2009 by prominent scholars in the field for a book of which I was the editor in chief. That version of the book was the Chinese edition and was entitled 北美中国学 - 研究概述与文献资源 (Chinese Studies in North America: Research and Resources). It was published by Zhonghua Shuju 中华书局, one of the most prestigious publishing houses in China. These essays are intended to provide a comprehensive overview of Chinese studies in North America, particularly of work developed since the 1980s. Essays by renowned scholars in the field cover a wide range of subjects, including Chinese history, humanities and social sciences, arts, education, and law, showcasing both the breadth and depth of the discipline. The Chinese version of the book received extensive attention after it was published in October 2010. As a result many people suggested that publication of an English-language version would further help the teaching of and research into Chinese studies in North America. For many reasons, the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) is the most appropriate organization to publish this volume.

First of all, I would like to thank all of the authors of the review essays. Without their support, this book project could not even have been started. I also wish to thank Professor Thomas Rawski for his strong recommendation to the AAS; Professor Gail Hershatter, former AAS President, for her invaluable support; and Jonathan Wilson, AAS Publications Manager, for his timely action.

I am particularly grateful to University Center for International Studies at University of Pittsburgh (UCIS), Stanford University Library, and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library for their generous and valuable financial support without which this project could not be completed.

I would like to especially thank the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh Library System (ULS), and the East Asian Library, where I have been working for more than ten years, for their strong, continued support. I couldn't have completed this project without it. I would particularly like to thank Dr. Rush Miller, director of the ULS, whose continued support of scholarly work integrating Chinese and American academic activities has allowed this project to proceed.

I would like to thank the members of my editorial team, Zhaohui Xue from Stanford University, Dr. Shuyong Jiang from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Dr. Gary Lance Lugar from the University of Pittsburgh, who have enabled this project to proceed smoothly and successfully. Finally, Dr. Qing Yang and Dr. Lin Lin's help is very much appreciated.

Haihui Zhang
University of Pittsburgh

Foreword

Gail Hershatter

A Scholarly Review of Chinese Studies in North America is a massively ambitious and timely volume. It began as a project to introduce North America–based scholarly research on China to scholars based in China. Commissioned by Haihui Zhang, the Chinese studies librarian at the University of Pittsburgh’s East Asian Library and her editorial team, and originally written in English, most of the essays in this volume were translated into Chinese and published as *Beimei Zhongguoxue* (China Studies in North America) by the Zhonghua shuju publishing house in late 2010.

Along the way, however, a radical thought occurred to Haihui Zhang and some of her scholarly colleagues: perhaps the English-speaking world was also in need of this volume. Anglophone studies of China have developed in particular ways, often in dialogue with other area specialists in the same discipline, or with evolutions in cultural theory and the social sciences more broadly. In North America and Europe, Chinese studies is a large, sprawling, heterogeneous, and lively set of conversations. It cannot properly be called a “field”—no one can claim familiarity with all of its subsets, let alone field mastery. And yet there are times when our teaching, research, and interactions with scholars who do not study China require us to educate ourselves, quickly but carefully, about conversations adjacent to our own.

We can all benefit from high-quality introductions to major subfields as they have evolved in Chinese studies over the past three decades—roughly the period of time during which improved access to Chinese materials has enabled such an expansion of knowledge that no one person can keep track of it. All of the contributors are respected and accomplished authors in their fields. Because these essays were originally written with a scholarly Chinese audience in mind, each author has had to assess major trends and make them legible to an educated audience that is nonetheless outside the world of anglophone scholarship. This has required everyone to stand back from the ongoing microdebates that often preoccupy us, assess long-standing conflicts and contributions, and put a premium on explaining them clearly.

In addition to its audience among China specialists, this volume will be indispensable for graduate students and upper-division undergraduates. In the fields of history, literature, music, economics, sociology, and art, the book also has a substantial potential audience among non-Asia specialists who are looking for a comparative or world-historical perspective on particular questions, including the nature of early modernity, the development of science, or recent trends in the study of early and medieval arts and letters.

To assemble this kind of talent in a single volume is not a simple undertaking, and editor Haihui Zhang is to be commended for her energy, vision, and persistence. *A Scholarly Review of Chinese Studies in North America* is an important project, and one that the Association for Asian Studies is ideally

situated to publish. It is our hope that publication in electronic format by the AAS will bring this compendium to a global audience that deserves and needs it.

Gail Hershatter is Distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of History at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her books include *The Workers of Tianjin, 1900–1949* (1986), *Personal Voices: Chinese Women in the 1980s* (with Emily Honig, 1988), *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (1997), *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century* (2007), and *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past* (2011). She is past president of the Association for Asian Studies (2011–12).

History: Early China

Paul R. Goldin

There would hardly be an early China field in North America were it not for David N. Keightley, now retired from the University of California, Berkeley. H. G. Creel was probably the only great American student of early China before Keightley; most other scholars considered early China a moribund field with few outstanding research questions of any interest and based their understanding of the period primarily on the dynastic histories and Thirteen Classics. Even the redoubtable Derk Bodde and Arthur Waley, for all their pioneering contributions, used few other sources. This was, of course, narrow-minded even in its own time, as the work of scholars such as Noel Barnard, Cheng Te-k'un, Bernhard Karlgren, Li Chi, and Paul L-M. Serruys had already demonstrated for English readers the importance of bronze inscriptions and other excavated materials.¹ But most American historians of China in the mid-twentieth century were devotees of John King Fairbank, and therefore focused on social and institutional history, for which the available sources for China's earliest periods were thought to be lacking. (Fairbank's own interest in ancient China was virtually nil.) Eventually, Han administrative documents from Juyan 居延 and other sites would offer scholars fruitful terrain for the institutional history of early China as well, but these were not widely known in the West until the 1960s and 1970s, when Michael Loewe made it impossible to ignore them.²

Keightley excelled in an area that few Americans had ever touched: Shang oracle-bone inscriptions. Here he applied his conviction that historical truths are best uncovered in the study of details—not trivia but the hard and quotidian details that either support or explode grand theories. His most influential publication was *Sources of Shang History: The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China*³ which remains, three decades later, the standard English introduction to the study of oracle bones. Specialists continue to prize his long research articles in which he reconstructed the political and religious milieu of the Shang dynasty through oracle-bone inscriptions. Keightley argued, essentially, that the Shang state was everything the king claimed, wherever he happened to be at any given time, and that the administrative center, consequently, moved with the person of the sovereign.⁴ In his articles, Keightley also studied the metaphysics of Shang divination;⁵ Shang religion, which, he argued, was not the shamanistic affair that scholars such as K. C. Chang described;⁶ the light shed by oracle-bone inscriptions on the origin of writing in China;⁷ and the distinctive features of early Chinese art and culture, especially in contradistinction to those of ancient Greece.⁸

If I have one criticism of Keightley's work, it is that he sometimes overgeneralized about China—in marked departure from his usual approach of seeking truth in details—especially when contrasting China with other cultures. For example, in his contribution to a collaborative volume on Chinese history intended for undergraduate instruction, Keightley juxtaposed a famous Greek cylix depicting

Achilles (as he is about to slay the Amazon Penthesilea) and a Chinese vase showing multiple unnamed fighters and archers. Then he writes:

This Chinese vase expresses the ideals of organization that were being applied with increasing effectiveness during the period of the Warring States (453–221 B.C.), a period when men fought less for individual honor, as Achilles had done, and more for the survival of the state. Aesthetic concerns were focused on the general, the social, and the non-heroic rather than on the particular, the individual, and the heroic.⁹

But a student would be badly misled to believe that there was no room in early China for named individual heroes. Moreover, they did not always risk their lives for the survival of the state. On the contrary, their activities often threatened its very stability.¹⁰

One final accomplishment of Keightley worthy of note is his founding of the journal *Early China*. Even now, with the field well established and many journals accepting articles on early Chinese studies, the standing of *Early China* is still significant; back in 1975, when the first issue appeared, it meant the difference for many fledgling scholars between surviving in the academic world and not having any opportunity to publish whatsoever. *Early China* should follow the lead of other journals in the twenty-first century and make their content available online, as it has become too difficult for nonsubscribers to keep abreast of this important resource.

* * *

The next important figure to be considered is David S. Nivison, one of the few scholars who is regarded with equal respect by philosophers and historians.¹¹ Nivison's work is not cited as frequently today as one might expect, but he was crucial to the development of the field because he trained scholars both in Chinese philosophy, such as Philip J. Ivanhoe, Kwong-loi Shun, and Bryan W. Van Norden, and in early Chinese history, such as Edward L. Shaughnessy. These former students of Nivison are extremely influential today.

Much of Nivison's work has focused on establishing precise absolute dates for Bronze Age China; his studies have become ever more abstruse with time, and usually only specialists find occasion to consult them.¹² But his contributions to Chinese philosophy (especially regarding Mencius and Xunzi), and his pathbreaking investigations of the term *de* 德 in both prephilosophical and philosophical contexts, have become seminal to contemporary research.¹³ Most of Nivison's prominent students have been in philosophy as well. Ivanhoe, Shun, and Van Norden have all been motivated by their teacher's long-term fascination with the *Mencius* and have published extensively on that text. Shun's *Mencius and Early Chinese Thought* is probably the most widely read internationally, but Ivanhoe and Van Norden have made important contributions too.¹⁴ All three have become respected scholars for their ability to combine razor-sharp argumentation (in the tradition of Anglo-American analytical philosophy) with a sensitive understanding of the classical Chinese language and its culture.

Shaughnessy, for his part, is currently one of the most active scholars in early Chinese cultural history. His best-known work is probably *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels*, which was intended to provide for bronze inscriptions what Keightley had earlier done for oracle-bone inscriptions. Shaughnessy has been productive since then, too. He has published on the *Yijing* 易

經 (the subject of his dissertation), including a complete translation of the *Yijing* manuscript from Mawangdui 馬王堆,¹⁵ as well as Western Zhou history,¹⁶ bronze inscriptions,¹⁷ and archaeologically recovered texts on other media, such as bamboo and silk.¹⁸ Broadly stated, Shaughnessy's attitude is that such materials are invaluable for providing an alternative to the partisan versions of Chinese history familiar from received sources. Shaughnessy and his colleague Donald Harper, who specializes in Warring States religion and natural philosophy,¹⁹ have made the University of Chicago a major center for the study of early China.

Two other important students of Nivison are David W. Pankenier, who studies early Chinese astronomy and its relation to cultural history,²⁰ and Jeffrey K. Riegel, who is best known for collaborating with John Knoblock on a complete English translation of the *Lǐshì chūnqiū* 呂氏春秋.²¹

The above is intended not to suggest that Keightley and Nivison are the only two figures in early China studies who are worth recognizing but to emphasize their importance to the development of that field in North America. Moreover, it is worth noting that Keightley (Berkeley) and Nivison (Stanford) were both based in the Bay Area of San Francisco, marking that city for many years as the undisputed capital of early China studies on this continent. Until recently the East Coast was a relative backwater. Berkeley has continued Keightley's line by recently appointing Michael Nylan, a specialist in Han dynasty cultural and intellectual history.²² Stanford has not let its tradition of excellence die out either, having invited Mark Edward Lewis, the most prolific American historian of ancient China,²³ to an endowed professorship in 2002.

* * *

Next, some words about the general strengths and weaknesses of early China studies in the North America. First the strengths: American scholars of early China tend to be well versed in contemporary methodology and are especially strong in the areas of cultural and intellectual history. Peer review, despite allegations of bias and ineffectiveness,²⁴ has served as an important catalyst. Before publication, academic articles and books are subjected to more rigorous external review in North America than in Asia (and indeed most of Europe), making it difficult for submissions with serious methodological weaknesses to go to press without revision. Peer review is necessarily imperfect, but it does help to prevent egregiously poor or unsubstantiated work from being published. Graduate curricula are also to be thanked. Most American PhD programs require students to take at least one seminar in research methodology before graduation, and the instructor is usually not the students' primary academic adviser. This forces budding scholars to develop modes of inquiry and argumentation that are persuasive to multiple readers.

Furthermore, the study of early China tends to be interdisciplinary in North America, encouraging a critical and nuanced use of disciplinary methods. Most specialists are located in East Asian studies programs, where the faculty is not beholden to any specific disciplinary protocols (such as those of history, archaeology, anthropology, etc.) and are therefore free to adopt whichever approaches best suit their material and purpose. If everyone in the field were assigned to a history department, for example, there might be a risk that we would all start viewing the world with the same lenses.

Cultural and intellectual history flourish largely because the extant sources attract scholars interested in those subjects in the first place. Although more and more ancient administrative documents have

been unearthed in recent decades—such as those from Juyan 居延, Shuihudi 睡虎地, Zhangjiashan 張家山, Liye 里耶, and Zoumalou 走馬樓—these still do not draw much attention from Americans;²⁵ most focus instead on the manuscripts from Mawangdui 馬王堆, Guodian 郭店, and, most recently, the Warring States bamboo texts housed in the Shanghai Museum 上海博物館藏戰國楚竹書. (The political and social history of early China is dominated by Chinese and Japanese scholars; even the historians who publish in these fields in Western languages tend not to be American.)²⁶ Some of the top names in the field include Scott Cook,²⁷ Mark Csikszentmihalyi,²⁸ Martin Kern,²⁹ Michael J. Puett,³⁰ and David Schaberg.³¹

Another strength is gender studies. America was one of the earliest hearths of feminism, and today, a few decades later, one of the healthy consequences is that historians both male and female take the study of sex and gender seriously (without necessarily identifying themselves politically or philosophically with the feminist movement). Some of the most interesting social history involving women focuses on later periods of Chinese history, where more abundant records make it possible to reconstruct women's property rights, social relations, and so on.³² But some scholars have been able to use both received and newly excavated sources to shed light on gender relations in early China as well.³³ Sexuality has been another area of decisive advances; it is finally permissible to study sexuality without embarrassment or fear of stigma, and American scholars have taken advantage of this conducive atmosphere.³⁴

Finally, a candid admission of our most glaring weakness: we have little paleography to speak of. With too few exceptions, American scholars who work with ancient manuscripts and inscriptions rely on transcriptions prepared by Chinese epigraphers. Part of the reason for this is bad luck. Many of the best American paleographers have worked at institutions without PhD programs, and thus have been unable to train a new generation of specialists. Examples include Gilbert L. Mattos,³⁵ who taught at Seton Hall University before his untimely demise, as well as the aforementioned David W. Pankenier and his colleague, Constance A. Cook, who are both at Lehigh University. Meanwhile, those paleographers who do enjoy the opportunity to supervise PhD students have simply not trained enough of them. Keightley produced relatively few graduate students, as has Takashima Ken-ichi, a respected paleographer who has taught at the University of British Columbia for many years. One of the few scholars currently training students in paleography is Lothar von Falkenhausen at UCLA.³⁶

But the structure of graduate education is also partly to blame. In a typical history department, a PhD student is required to take numerous courses in research methodology and comparative historiography, leaving too little time for recondite subjects such as paleography. The result is that hardly any recent PhDs find time to acquire the necessary training—and those who *do* wish to make room for it in their schedules discover that there is little alternative but to study with Chinese or Japanese scholars abroad. North Americans will have to address this deficiency if they wish to undertake original research on the ever-increasing wealth of excavated texts.

Notes

Paul R. Goldin is Professor and Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania. His main research interests include early Chinese cultural and intellectual history, as well as sexuality and gender in premodern China. He is the author of *Rituals of the Way: The Philosophy of Xunzi* (1999), *The Culture of Sex in Ancient China* (2002), and *After Confucius: Studies in Early Chinese Philosophy* (2005). In addition, he edited the revised version of R. H. van Gulik's classic study *Sexual Life in Ancient China* (2003) and coedited the *Hawai'i Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture* (2005).

This essay was written in June 2009.

¹ See <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/ealc/paul-r-goldin> for a comprehensive bibliography of Western-language studies of early China (updated regularly and comprising approximately 9,100 items as of December 2012).

² See, for example, Michael Loewe, *Records of Han Administration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967–68); and his “Wooden Documents,” *Essays on the Sources for Chinese History*, ed. Donald D. Leslie et al. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1971), 36–41; “Han Administrative Documents: Recent Finds from the North-west,” *T'oung Pao* 72 (1986): 291–314; and “Wood and Bamboo Administrative Documents of the Han Period,” in *New Sources of Early Chinese History: An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts*, ed. Edward L. Shaughnessy, Early China Special Monographs, no. 3 (Berkeley, CA, 1997), 161–92.

³ More recently, see his “Shang Oracle-Bone Inscriptions,” in *New Sources of Early Chinese History: An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts*, ed. Edward L. Shaughnessy, Early China Special Monographs, no. 3 (Berkeley, CA, 1997), 15–55.

⁴ See, for example, David Keightley, “The Shang State as Seen in the Oracle-Bone Inscriptions,” *Early China* 5 (1979–80): 25–34 “The Late Shang State: When, Where, and What?,” in *Origins of Chinese Civilization*, ed. David Keightley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 523–64; and “The Shang: China's First Historical Dynasty,” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge, 1999), 232–91.

⁵ David Keightley, “Late Shang Divination: The Magico-Religious Legacy,” in *Explorations in Early Chinese Cosmology*, ed. Henry Rosemont Jr. (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), 11–34; “Shang Divination and Metaphysics,” *Philosophy East and West* 28.4 (1988): 367–97; “The ‘Science’ of the Ancestors: Divination, Curing, and Bronze-Casting in Late Shang China,” *Asia Major* (third series) 14.2 (2001): 143–87.

⁶ David Keightley, “The Religious Commitment: Shang Theology and the Genesis of Chinese Political Culture,” *History of Religions* 17.3–4 (1978): 211–24; “Shamanism, Death, and the Ancestors: Religious Mediation in Neolithic and Shang China (ca. 5000–1000 B.C.),” *Asiatische Studien* 52.3 (1998): 763–831; “The Making of the Ancestors: Late Shang Religion and Its Legacy,” in *Religion and Chinese Society: A Centennial Conference of the École française d'Extrême-Orient*, ed. John Lagerwey (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2004), 1:3–63.

⁷ David Keightley, “The Origins of Writing in China: Scripts and Cultural Contexts,” in *The Origins of Writing*, ed. Wayne M. Senner (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 171–202; “Art, Ancestors, and the Origin of Writing in China,” *Representations* 56 (1996): 68–95; “Marks and Labels: Early Writing in Neolithic and Shang China,” in *Archaeology of Asia*, ed. Miriam T. Stark, Blackwell Studies in Global Archaeology (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 177–201.

⁸ David Keightley, “Clean Hands and Shining Helmets: Heroic Action in Early Chinese and Greek Culture,” in *Religion and Authority*, ed. Tobin Siebers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 13–51; “Epistemology

in Cultural Contexts: Disguise and Deception in Early China and Early Greece,” in *Early China/Ancient Greece: Thinking through Comparisons*, ed. Steven Shankman and Stephen W. Durrant, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 2002), 119–53.

⁹ David Keightley, “Early Civilization in China: Reflections on How It Became Chinese,” in *Heritage of China: Contemporary Perspectives on Chinese Civilization*, ed. Paul S. Ropp (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 19.

¹⁰ Cf. Mark Edward Lewis, *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 1990), 80–94.

¹¹ He is also one of the few early China specialists with notable publications in other fields, such as David S. Nivison, *The Life and Thought of Chang Hsiieh-ch'eng, 1738–1801*, Stanford Studies in the Civilizations of Eastern Asia (Stanford, CA, 1966).

¹² See, for example, David S. Nivison, “The Dates of the Western Chou,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43.2 (1983): 481–580; “The Key to the Chronology of the Three Dynasties: The ‘Modern Text’ *Bamboo Annals*,” *Sino-Platonic Papers* 93 (1999); and “The Xia-Shang-Zhou Chronology Project: Two Approaches to Dating,” *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 4 (2002): 359–66.

¹³ See especially *The Ways of Confucianism: Investigations in Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Bryan W. Van Norden (Chicago and La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1996). See also “Hsun Tzu and Chuang Tzu,” in *Chinese Texts and Philosophical Contexts: Essays Dedicated to Angus C. Graham*, ed. Henry Rosemont Jr., Critics and Their Critics, no. 1 (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1991), 129–42; “Mengzi as a Philosopher of History,” in *Mencius: Contexts and Interpretations*, ed. Alan K. L. Chan (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 282–304; and “Mengzi: Just Not Doing It,” in *Essays on the Moral Philosophy of Mengzi*, ed. Xiusheng Liu and Philip J. Ivanhoe (Indianapolis and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2002), 132–42.

Nivison was evidently unaware that Jao Tsung-yi 饒宗頤 had made similar observations about *de* in paleographic literature in “The Character *te* in Bronze Inscriptions,” trans. Noel Barnard, in *Ancient Chinese Bronzes and Southeast Asian Metal and Other Archaeological Artifacts*, ed. Noel Barnard (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1976), 145–54.

¹⁴ Philip J. Ivanhoe, “A Question of Faith: A New Interpretation of *Mencius* 2B.13,” *Early China* 13 (1988): 153–65; *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2000); “Mengzi, Xunzi, and Modern Feminist Ethics,” in *The Sage and the Second Sex: Confucianism, Ethics, and Gender*, ed. Chenyang Li (Chicago and La Salle, IL: Open Court, 2000), 57–74; “Confucian Self Cultivation and Mengzi’s Notion of Extension,” in *Essays on the Moral Philosophy of Mengzi*, ed. Xiusheng Liu and Philip J. Ivanhoe (Indianapolis and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2002), 221–41; *Ethics in the Confucian Tradition: The Thought of Mengzi and Wang Yangming*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2002); “Mengzi’s Conception of Courage,” *Dao* 5.2 (2006): 221–34; “Heaven as a Source for Ethical Warrant in Early Confucianism,” *Dao* 6.3 (2007): 211–20.

Van Norden’s relevant publications include Bryan W. Van Norden, *Virtue Ethics and Consequentialism in Early Chinese Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2007, with a long section on Mencius that represents a summation of many years of study; and a complete translation, *Mengzi: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2008). He has also edited a volume on Confucius entitled *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹⁵ Edward L. Shaughnessy, *I Ching: The Classic of Changes, the First English Translation of the Newly Discovered Second-Century B.C. Mawangdui Texts*, Classics of Ancient China (New York: Ballantine, 1996). See also Shaughnessy’s “The Origins of an *Yijing* Line Statement,” *Early China* 20 (1995): 223–40; “The Fuyang *Zhou Yi* and the Making

of a Divination Manual,” *Asia Major* (third series) 14.1 (2001): 7–18; “The Wangjiatai *Gui cang*: An Alternative to *Yijing* Divination,” in *Facets of Tibetan Religious Tradition and Contacts with Neighbouring Cultural Areas*, ed. Alfredo Cadonna and Ester Bianchi (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2002), 95–126; and “A First Reading of the Shanghai Museum Bamboo-Strip Manuscript of the *Zhou Yi*,” *Early China* 30 (2005–6): 1–24.

¹⁶ Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Western Zhou History,” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge, 1999), 292–351; and “Toward a Social Geography of the Zhouyuan during the Western Zhou Dynasty: The Jing and Zhong Lineages of Fufeng County,” in *Political Frontiers, Ethnic Boundaries, and Human Geographies in Chinese History*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo and Don J. Wyatt (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 16–34.

¹⁷ Edward L. Shaughnessy, “Western Zhou Bronze Inscriptions,” in *New Sources of Early Chinese History: An Introduction to the Reading of Inscriptions and Manuscripts*, ed. Edward L. Shaughnessy, Early China Special Monographs, no. 3 (Berkeley, CA, 1997), 57–84; “New Sources of Western Zhou History: Recent Discoveries of Inscribed Bronze Vessels,” *Early China* 26–27 (2001–2): 73–98; “The Writing of a Late Western Zhou Bronze Inscription,” *Asiatische Studien* 61.3 (2007): 845–77.

¹⁸ Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Before Confucius: Studies in the Creation of the Chinese Classics*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 1997); “The Guodian Manuscripts and Their Place in Twentieth-Century Historiography on the *Laozi*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65.2 (2005): 417–57; *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 2006).

¹⁹ See, for example, Donald Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature: The Mawangdui Medical Manuscripts*, Sir Henry Wellcome Asian Series (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1998); “Warring States Natural Philosophy and Occult Thought,” in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge, 1999), 813–84; and “Contracts with the Spirit World in Han Common Religion: The Xuning Prayer and Sacrifice Documents of A.D. 79,” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 14 (2004): 227–67.

²⁰ See, for example, David W. Pankenier, “The Cosmo-Political Background of Heaven’s Mandate,” *Early China* 20 (1995): 121–76; “Applied Field-Allocation Astrology in Zhou China: Duke Wen of Jin and the Battle of Chengpu,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119.2 (1999): 261–79; and “Temporality and the Fabric of Space-Time in Early Chinese Thought,” in *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World*, ed. Ralph M. Rosen (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 2004), 129–46.

²¹ John Knoblock and Jeffrey Riegel, trans., *The Annals of Lü Buwei: A Complete Translation and Study* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000). Another important study by Riegel is “Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings of *Shijing* Commentary,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57.1 (1997): 143–77, which was one of the first American publications to elucidate the dimensions of sexuality in classical Chinese commentary.

²² Major works by Michael Nylan include *The Shifting Center: The Original “Great Plan” and Later Readings*, Monumenta Serica Monographs, no. 24 (Sankt Augustin, Germany, 1992); “Han Classicists Writing about Their Own Tradition,” *Philosophy East and West* 47.2 (1997): 133–88; and *The Five “Confucian” Classics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001); as well as a translation of the *Taixuan jing* 太玄經 by Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53 BC–AD 18), *The Canon of Supreme Mystery*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 1993).

²³ Major works by Mark Edward Lewis’s (in addition to the aforementioned *Sanctioned Violence in Early China*) include *Writing and Authority in Early China*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 1999); and

The Construction of Space in Early China, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 2005). Lewis has also provided the first two volumes (*Qin and Han*, 2007, and *Northern and Southern Dynasties*, 2009) for the new History of Imperial China series published by Harvard University Press.

²⁴ For example, see Brian Martin, *Suppression Stories* (Wollongong, Australia: Fund for Intellectual Dissent, 1997).

²⁵ I know of only one recent American publication on *any* of these materials: Michael Nylan, “Notes on a Case of Illicit Sex from Zhangjiashan: A Translation and Commentary,” *Early China* 30 (2005–6): 25–45.

²⁶ For example, see Robin D. S. Yates, “Texts on the Military and Government from Yinqueshan: Introductions and Preliminary Translations,” in *Studies on Recently Discovered Chinese Manuscripts: Proceedings of International Conference [sic] on Recently Discovered Chinese Manuscripts, August 2000, Beijing* 新出簡帛研究：新出簡帛國際學術研討會文集, ed. Sarah Allan and Xing Wen, Aurora Centre for the Study of Ancient Civilizations, Peking University, Publication Series, no. 8 北京大學震旦古代文明研究中心學術叢書之八 (Beijing: Wenwu, 2004), 334–87; “Slavery in Early China: A Socio-cultural Approach,” *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 3.1–2 (2001): 283–331; and “State Control of Bureaucrats under the Qin: Techniques and Procedures,” *Early China* 20 (1995): 331–65. Yates is British but teaches at McGill University in Montreal. See also Yuri Pines, “The Question of Interpretation: Qin History in Light of New Epigraphic Sources,” *Early China* 29 (2004): 1–44.

²⁷ Major works by Scott Cook include “The *Liushi chunqiu* and the Resolution of Philosophical Dissonance,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 62.2 (2002): 307–45; “The Debate over Coercive Rulership and the ‘Human Way’ in Light of Recently Excavated Warring States Texts,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 64.2 (2004): 399–440; and a provocative edited volume, *Hiding the World in the World: Uneven Discourses on the Zhuangzi*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 2003).

²⁸ Major works by Mark Csikszentmihalyi include “Confucius,” in *The Rivers of Paradise: Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, and Muhammad as Religious Founders*, ed. David Noel Freedman and Michael J. McClymond (Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 233–308; *Material Virtue: Ethics and the Body in Early China*, *Sinica Leidensia*, no. 66 (Leiden: Brill, 2004); and *Readings in Han Chinese Thought* (Indianapolis and Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2006).

²⁹ Martin Kern’s early publications were in German; since then his major English works include “*Shi jing* Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of ‘Chu ci’ (‘Thorny Caltrop’),” *Early China* 25 (2000): 49–111; *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch’in Shib-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation*, American Oriental Series, no. 85 (New Haven, 2000); “Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of Textual Variants and the Modes of Manuscript Production in Early China,” *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 4 (2002): 143–81; “The Performance of Writing in Western Zhou China,” in *The Poetics of Grammar and the Metaphysics of Sound and Sign*, ed. S. La Porta and D. Shulman, Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture, no. 6 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 109–75; “Bronze Inscriptions, the *Shangshu*, and the *Shijing*: The Evolution of the Ancestral Sacrifice during the Western Zhou,” in *Early Chinese Religion, Part 1: Shang through Han (1250 BC–220 AD)*, ed. John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski, Handbuch der Orientalistik, IV.21 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1:143–200; and his edited volume, *Text and Ritual in Early China* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2005), which includes an important essay, “The *Odes* in Excavated Manuscripts” (149–93).

³⁰ Michael J. Puett is a very productive scholar whose publications cannot be encompassed in a single note. Representative titles include *The Ambivalence of Creation: Debates Concerning Innovation and Artifice in Early China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001); *To Become a God: Cosmology, Sacrifice, and Self-Divinization in Early China*, Harvard-Yenching Institute Monographs, no. 57 (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2002); “The Ethics of

Responding Properly: The Notion of *Qing* 情 in Early Chinese Thought,” in *Love and Emotions in Traditional Chinese Literature*, ed. Halvor Eifring, Sinica Leidensia, no. 63 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 37–68; and “Forming Spirits for the Way: The Cosmology of the *Xiang'er* Commentary to the *Laozi*,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 32 (2004): 1–28.

³¹ Major works by David Schaberg include *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, no. 205 (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2001), winner of the 2003 Association for Asian Studies, China and Inner Asia Council, Levenson Book Prize; and “Playing at Critique: Indirect Remonstrance and the Formation of *Shi* Identity,” in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Martin Kern (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2005), 193–225.

³² See, for example, Kathryn Bernhardt, *Women and Property in China, 960–1949*, Law, Society, and Culture in China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Bettine Birge, *Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction in Sung and Yuan China*, Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature, and Institutions (Cambridge, 2002); Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Women and the Family in Chinese History*, Critical Asian Scholarship (London and New York: Routledge, 2002); Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); and Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997). Ko also coedited a useful collection of essays entitled *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea, and Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). See www.sas.upenn.edu/ealc/paul-r-goldin for a comprehensive bibliography of Western-language studies of gender and sexuality in premodern China (updated regularly and comprising approximately 1,050 entries as of December 2012).

³³ The most prolific has been Bret Hinsch, an American scholar working in Taiwan. See *Women in Early Imperial China*, Asian Voices (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); “Textiles and Female Virtue in Early Imperial Chinese Historical Writing,” *Nan Nü* 5.2 (2003): 170–202; “Prehistoric Images of Women from the North China Region: The Origins of Chinese Goddess Worship?” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 32 (2004): 47–82; and “The Composition of *Lienüzhuan*: Was Liu Xiang the Author or Editor?” *Asia Major* (third series) 20.1 (2007): 1–23. See also the work of Lisa Raphals: for example, *Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China*, SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, 1998); “Arguments by Women in Early Chinese Texts,” *Nan Nü* 3.2 (2001): 157–95; and “A Woman Who Understood the Rites,” in *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays*, ed. Bryan W. Van Norden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 275–302.

³⁴ For example, see my *The Culture of Sex in Ancient China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002); and, more recently, “The Cultural and Religious Background of Sexual Vampirism in Ancient China,” *Theology and Sexuality* 12.3 (2006): 287–310. See also Donald Harper, “The Sexual Arts of Ancient China as Described in a Manuscript of the Second Century B.C.,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47.2 (1987): 539–93; and Douglas Wile, *Art of the Bedchamber: The Chinese Sexual Yoga Classics, Including Women's Solo Meditation Texts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), both of which include translations of Mawangdui sexual self-cultivation texts.

³⁵ Mattos collaborated with Jerry Norman on an expanded translation of Qiu Xigui's 裘錫圭 monumental *Wenzì xué gāiyào* 文字學概要: *Chinese Writing*, Early China Special Monographs, no. 4 (Berkeley, CA, 2000). His major earlier work was a complete translation and analysis of the Stone Drums of Qin 秦石鼓: *The Stone Drums of Ch'in*, Monumenta Serica Monographs, no. 19 (Nettetal, Germany: Steyler, 1988).

³⁶ Von Falkenhausen is also active as an archaeologist. His major publications include Lothar von Falkenhausen, “Issues in Western Zhou Studies: A Review Article,” *Early China* 18 (1993): 139–226; “Reflections on the Political Role of Spirit Mediums in Early China: The *Wu* Officials in the *Zhou Li*,” *Early China* 20 (1995): 279–300; “The

External Connections of Sanxingdui,” *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 5 (2003): 191–245; “Social Ranking in Chu Tombs: The Mortuary Background of the Warring States Manuscript Finds,” *Monumenta Serica* 51 (2003): 439–526; “Mortuary Behavior in Pre-imperial Qin: A Religious Interpretation,” in *Religion and Chinese Society: A Centennial Conference of the École française d’Extrême-Orient*, ed. John Lagerwey (Paris: École française d’Extrême-Orient, 2004), 1:109–72; *Chinese Society in the Age of Confucius (1000–250 BC): The Archaeological Evidence*, Ideas, Debates, and Perspectives, no. 2 (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, University of California, Los Angeles, 2006); and “The Inscribed Bronzes from Yangjiacun: New Evidence on Social Structure and Historical Consciousness in Late Western Zhou China (c. 800 BC),” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 139 (2006): 239–96.

History and Society of Early Medieval China

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One of the most complex and least familiar periods of Chinese history, the three centuries between the Han and Tang empires have only in recent decades become established in the United States as a distinct domain of research. A newsletter dedicated to the period was initiated in the late 1970s,¹ and the first conference about the era, “State and Society in Early Medieval China,” took place in 1980 at Stanford University. This led to a collection of essays by Albert Dien, Patricia Ebrey, Mao Han-kuang of the Academia Sinica in Taiwan, and Tang Changru of Wuhan University, among others.² Six years later specialists and interested scholars organized the Early Medieval China Group (EMCG) for the purpose of discussing fundamental issues in the character of the times.³ A revived serial circulated among the organization’s members from 1988 to 1991.⁴ It was followed in 1994 by the inaugural issue of *Early Medieval China*, a refereed annual journal currently in its sixteenth year” to “a refereed journal that is published annually.⁵

In 1996 a second international conference was convened by the Early Medieval China Group at Western Washington University, which was titled “Dialogue with the Ancients: New Perspectives on Thought and Action in Early Medieval China.” Its proceedings were similarly revised and published, with new contents added, and included contributions by Albert Dien, David Knechtges, Liu Shufen of the Academia Sinica in Taiwan, and Donald Holzman of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris.⁶ In 2005 and 2006, ten scholars from US universities were among those who gave papers at a two-part conference held in Shanghai and Singapore, “The World of Thought in Early Medieval China.” The resulting studies were edited by Alan K. Chan and Lo Yuet-keung of the National University of Singapore (NUS), and will be printed in two volumes by the State University of New York Press.⁷

The Early Medieval China Group occasionally sponsors panels at the yearly meeting in the United States of the Association for Asian Studies, of which it is an affiliate member. A regular activity that supports the translation into English of primary sources is an informal text-reading session held each year in conjunction with the AAS conference. Scholars bring draft translations of materials to the session, and those attending offer suggestions for the interpretation of problematic passages. These dialogues are an opportunity in an informal setting to discuss the significance that texts had in their time and to keep abreast of new research projects.

The activities of the Southeast Early China Roundtable (SEECR) have also promoted the dissemination of research about early medieval China. Within the broad scope of SEECR’s focus, which is the study of China from earliest times through the Tang, the annual meeting of the organization

typically includes papers concerning the centuries between Han and Tang. It also has sponsored panels dealing largely with medieval China at the meetings of the AAS.⁸

Apart from these conferences, and building on a handful of pioneering works in Chinese, Japanese, and Western languages, US scholars have produced many studies since the 1980's that enlarge our knowledge about the period. Archaeological discoveries have particularly invigorated the field abroad and led to more active interchange of ideas in the international community. The study of early medieval China is still very young, however. Owing to the lack of serious interest in the period's history prior to modern times, the main task of the early medieval historian remains the uncovering of information about institutions both civil and military, social formations, cultural ideals, and the conditions and practices of daily life. Debate continues on analytic methods and interpretation of the data. Within the limits of this general overview, we will describe English-language monographs of recent decades that focus on major lines of inquiry about early medieval China's history and society but mention only a few of the many essays or book chapters that have appeared. For a fuller idea of the disciplinary scope and quantity of recent scholarship, readers may turn to the bibliography at the EMCG website: www.earlymedievalchinagroup.org.⁹

Finally, several different terms are in use to describe the proliferation of dynasties that rose and fell during the third through sixth centuries. The overlapping "Six Dynasties" 六朝 and "Northern and Southern Dynasties" 南北朝 originally had more restricted meanings, in which each continues to be applied, but both labels have through practice come to indicate all the regimes of the period of disunity.¹⁰ The fuller "Wei, Jin, and Northern and Southern Dynasties" 魏晋南北朝 is seldom seen in English-language publications, probably because the expression in translation is so cumbersome.¹¹ Most inclusively, "early medieval China" 中国中古时代 is understood to encompass historical conditions and events that span the late Han through the Sui (581–618) and early Tang.¹²

A broad general history of this age has very recently appeared, authored by Mark Edward Lewis of Stanford University, an authority on early Chinese history and titled *China between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties*.¹³ The book is a synthetic overview of major features of the social and political history of China's early medieval age, looking at such topics as rural life and urban growth during the period and the creation for the educated of a new "autonomous" aesthetic realm and an enlarged role for women in the larger society. Perhaps the most interesting part of the book is its discussion of how, despite the growth of great families in the early centuries CE, China, unlike Rome, did not devolve into entrenched local power and political fragmentation. This was, according to Lewis, because of the presence of military dynasties in both north and south that controlled armies much larger than those that could be mustered by any local magnate.

Another important resource that has recently appeared is Albert Dien's *Six Dynasties Civilization*.¹⁴ Written by the most eminent historian of early medieval China, this monumental study provides highly detailed descriptions of material culture. Dien has drawn extensively on both archaeology and texts to look at a wide range of artifacts that reflect aspects of daily life (among other things, the construction and layout of cities and tombs, the fabrication and design of clothing and armor, furniture, musical instruments, and cooking utensils). His book explains differences in the cultures and lifestyles of the north and south and brings to light the objects' relevance to such issues as the assimilation of foreign cultures, technological advances, mercantile development, and changes in religious belief or practice.

Books on political and military history have also been published. Andrew Eisenberg's *Kingship in Early Medieval China* applies "Weberian historical sociological" concepts to examine the issues of succession and retired emperorship from the Northern Wei into the Tang.¹⁵ In *Ts'ao P'i Transcendent: The Political Culture of Dynasty-Founding in China at the End of the Han*, Howard L. Goodman details the canonical forms of justification and the ritual acts that accompanied the founding of the Wei.¹⁶ Also concerning this era, *Empresses and Consorts: Selections from Chen Shou's Records of the Three States with Pei Songzhi's Commentary*, by Robert Joe Cutter and William Gordon Crowell, investigates the lives of palace women and their roles in the political sphere.¹⁷ On the subject of military history, Andrew Chittick's *Patronage and Community in Medieval China: The Xiangyang Garrison, 400–600 CE* examines a militarized local society on the southern dynasties' frontier and its relationship with the political center at Jiankang.¹⁸ A broader overview of military history, and one that analyzes the strategies of campaigns and decisive battles, is David Graff's *Medieval Chinese Warfare, 300–900*.¹⁹ Some articles on military history, technology, and leadership have also been written.²⁰

Although it is a commonplace that medieval society was dominated by an aristocratic elite, the source and extent of the great families' power have been matters much debated. An early English-language study that stimulated discussion was *The Medieval Chinese Oligarchy*, in which David G. Johnson concluded after analyzing several hundred clans named in Tang dynasty tables of prefectural notables (郡望表) that 67 percent of the Jin dynasty's high officials were members of families still eminent during the Tang; access to office was a closed system in that social status derived from holding office, and local elites controlled the mechanism by which candidates were rated for placement in the bureaucracy (the Nine Grades and Impartial Judges, 九品中正).²¹ In *The Aristocratic Families of Early Imperial China, a Case Study of the Poling Ts'ui Family*, Patricia Ebrey proposed that the Boling Cui's 博陵崔 remarkable longevity owed to both government office and landholdings that sustained its members in times of political turmoil. In the long historical view, from the Northern Wei through Tang, the trend was of increasing dependence on office-holding for status.²² Countering the claim of enduring prominence, Dennis Grafflin found that only one of the top five émigré lineages of South China met the condition of having a family member known as far back as the late Han, as well as members who could be traced forward into the Tang.²³ His charts of known members indicate that the "superelite" lineages of the south rose to prominence by turn during the Eastern Jin through their success as military leaders, and that their fortunes were tied to transitory political regimes. In a study of the Yangjia Xie 阳夏谢 that emphasizes the perils of service at unstable courts, Cynthia Chennault observed that among the Xie's five descent lines still viable during the Liu-Song, only one branch maintained officeholders at court rank 5 or above through the Liang, and that one in six Xie males who reached that level was killed by the government.²⁴

Despite the lack of consensus on many issues concerning the character of the great families, it is now generally accepted that their roles in society differed in the north and south,²⁵ that their ability to determine policies of the southern courts eroded after the Eastern Jin, and that the advantage of pedigree became less important over time as focus was increasingly placed on social and moral standards, as well as acquired abilities. Scholars are less apt now to equate high social standing with political prowess, or to automatically associate a famous "choronym" with wealth.²⁶ One of the conspicuous pieces of evidence that underscores the need to distinguish among these assets is the occurrence during the Southern Qi and later of illegal marriages contracted between faded émigré families and commoners.²⁷

Poised between fiction and history, no work more vividly captures the social and intellectual climate of the late Han through Jin than the *Shishuo xinyu* 世说新语. Richard B. Mather's original translation of this compilation in 1976 was hailed as a milestone, not the least because the language of the early medieval era was undergoing significant semantic changes. The conversations in the *Shishuo xinyu*'s anecdotes reflect both the northern speech of Luoyang and the usages of the southern Wu dialect, and many Sanskrit terms besides. Benefiting from reviews and correspondence with other medievalists, Mather revised and supplemented his original work to produce a new edition of *Shishuo xinyu: A New Account of Tales of the World*, published in 2002.²⁸ Also, his student Qian Nanxiu has produced a study titled *Spirit and Self in Medieval China: The Shih-shuo hsin-yu and Its Legacy* in which she gives special attention to character appraisal (which had been important to evaluations for office holding but became an independent art in itself as a subject of “pure conversation” 清谈) and also discusses the compilation's impact in Japan.²⁹

The most influential of the cultivated monks to appear in the *Shishuo*'s pages was Zhi Dun 支遁 (314–66), who counted many famous figures of the time among his lay disciples. His life and thought are examined in Charles Holcombe's *In the Shadow of the Han: Literati Thought and Society at the Beginning of the Southern Dynasties*, and other essays in the present volume discuss the Eastern Jin's social order and assess its cultural values.³⁰ Reverence for the “Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove” 竹林七贤—historical personages whose communal association is apocryphal—is the subject of Audrey Spiro's *Contemplating the Ancients: Aesthetic and Social Issues in Early Chinese Portraiture*. Exploring the question of why these figures should be portrayed in tomb murals that were painted over a hundred years after their death, Spiro found from researching a wide range of materials that their portraits served to represent ideal traits of the cultivated gentleman for an aristocracy that for the most part had recently risen to prominence.³¹

Keith Knapp has written more recently on social history from a different ethical perspective in a book called *Selfless Offspring: Filial Children and Social Order in Medieval China*. Here he examines the construction and use of tales of the filial as a means of maintaining family cohesion in a time of “weak central governments and powerful local clans.”³² Albert Dien has written a number of interesting articles about religious and social aspects of Yan Zhitui's *Yanshi jiaxun*.³³ He has also done some work on Sogdians within the Chinese world.³⁴

Work in the field of art history has also provided insights on the society and cultural history of early medieval China. In her *Donors of Longmen: Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculpture*, for instance, Amy McNair has explored who it was from Northern Wei into the Tang who paid for the production of both the great monuments of Longmen, and of the lesser shrines as well. She has found that it was a variegated population, including emperors, empresses and aristocrats, but also artisans, and ordinary lay believers.³⁵ The theme of looking at the commoner is carried even further in *Ordinary Images*, in which Stanley Abe has chosen to ignore altogether the rich and the powerful, looking instead at the “run-of-the-mill” religious art that was mass-produced for ordinary people.³⁶ Other important works of art history include Dorothy Wong's *Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form*, and Ning Qiang's *Art, Religion, and Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family*, which was built in 642.³⁷

A major exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, titled “China, Dawn of a Golden Age: 200–750 AD,” brought about public appreciation of the dynamic complexity of early medieval culture. The exhibit opened in October 2004 for a three-month period, and featured over three hundred artifacts from dozens of museums and archaeological institutes in China. Particularly well represented were early Chinese Buddhist sculptures and luxury items and metalwork from Western and Central Asia that marked the introduction of foreign ideas, religion, and artistic motifs. Many of these artifacts were excavated in recent years and not previously displayed abroad.³⁸

A new approach has been given to the field of cultural history and cross-cultural encounter in John Kieschnick’s *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*.³⁹ In this groundbreaking work, Kieschnick looks at a variety of changes in the Chinese world under the influence of Buddhism, ranging from chairs and back scratchers to scepters and prayer beads. Other relatively recent works of importance examining the development of Buddhism in China include Stephen Teiser’s *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* and Chün-fang Yü’s *Kuan-yin*.⁴⁰ Wang Yi-t’ung’s annotated translation of the *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛阳伽蓝记 had been an important contribution to the study of the temples and monastic establishments of Luoyang, and of the lives and customs of the clergy and others who lived in the northern metropolis.⁴¹ More recently, Katherine Ann Tsai’s *Biographies of Chinese Buddhist Nuns from the Fourth to Sixth Centuries* presents a collection of translations concerning the lives and religious observances of devout female monastics of both north and south.⁴²

Perhaps even more groundbreaking work has been done in the field of Daoism, much of it resting on early work by French scholars such as Isabelle Robinet, who wrote *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, and Michel Strickmann, who wrote the seminal article “The Maoshan Revelations: Taoism and the Aristocracy.”⁴³ An outstanding American scholar following in the footsteps of Robinet, Strickmann, and others has been Stephen Bokenkamp, who in 1999 published *Early Daoist Scriptures*, a study of the early stages of the formation of the Daoist canon from the third to the sixth centuries CE. He has recently followed this up with *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China*, in which he examines the incorporation during the early medieval period of Buddhist ideas of rebirth into Daoism.⁴⁴ Following this line of investigation is Christine Mollier, who in *Buddhism and Taoism, Face to Face* investigates how in Chinese Buddhist apocrypha and the development of the Taoist scriptural tradition we see the complex interactions of these two religious systems in medieval China, and at times in fact “flagrant piracy,” from one side to the other.⁴⁵ Other important work on Daoism during the early medieval period can be found in the many works of Livia Kohn.⁴⁶

One of the most important religious and/or cultural forms to emerge in full form during China’s early medieval period is the phenomenon of reclusion—the most famous exemplar of this way of life being, of course, the poet and essayist Tao Qian (365–420). In *Men of the Cliffs and Caves: the Development of the Chinese Eremitic Tradition to the End of the Han Dynasty*, Aat Vervoorn situates the justification for eremitism in early philosophical and historical texts, particularly those associated with Confucius. In addition to describing sociopolitical situations that caused men of principle to resign from office, Vervoorn provides a chronological account through the ages of attitudes toward this antisocial decision.⁴⁷ While in agreement with Vervoorn on the moral basis of reclusion and other matters, Alan Berkowitz’s *Patterns of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* is conceptually different because it emphasizes that substantive reclusion must be distinguished from

the occasional, and sometimes temporary, withdrawal of officeholders. Broadening the discussion of “being hidden” from the world to include men in reclusion (隱士) who had never been involved with the government, Berkowitz also investigates tropes of the romantic idealization of reclusion and compares the rankings made by early medieval literati of various types of withdrawal.⁴⁸ Robert Ford Campany’s annotated translation of the *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 by Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–343), a large achievement in itself, is equipped with references to many other sources for the purpose of showing how this assembly of hagiographies might have developed from its earliest version through later redactions.⁴⁹

At this point mention should be made of several reference works. Victor C. Xiong’s recently published *Historical Dictionary of Medieval China* is dedicated to the early medieval period, as well as the Tang dynasty.⁵⁰ Two other reference works are being developed under the direction of the EMCG. The first is an ongoing index of noteworthy figures, available as an aid to researchers at the group’s website.⁵¹ The second project, organized under the leadership of Albert Dien, is a forthcoming guide to key texts of the period. Each entry of this multidisciplinary handbook will summarize the contents of the work or collection of writings, discuss sources for its compilation and primary editions, and provide a bibliography of relevant secondary scholarship, indexes, and translations into foreign languages.

Notes

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Scott Pearce is Professor and Chair of the Liberal Studies Department of Western Washington University in Bellingham in the state of Washington. He earned his PhD at Princeton, where he was a student of Denis Twitchett and F. W. Mote. His research focuses on the military, social, and political history of the northern dynasties. In 1996 he organized a conference on early medieval China funded by the American Council of Learned Societies and was coeditor of the resulting volume, *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200–600* (Harvard University Press, 2001). He has just finished a chapter on “Northern Wei” in a forthcoming volume of *Cambridge History of China*.

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¹ Four issues of “*Nan-Pei-Ch’ao Studies (Late Han–Early T’ang)*” were published during 1977–80, under the editorship of the late John Marney, who had been Associate Professor of Chinese at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan.

² This conference focused on the interface between social and political organizations. Some of the presentations were included in a volume of the same name, *State and Society in Early Medieval China*, ed. Albert E. Dien (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

³ Successive EMCG presidents have been John Marney, Albert E. Dien (Stanford University), Dennis Grafflin (Bates College), Scott Pearce (Western Washington University), Alan J. Berkowitz (Swarthmore College), and currently, Keith N. Knapp (The Citadel). The society was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 2000.

⁴ Numbers 1–4 (1988–91) of the “*Early Medieval China Group Newsletter*” were jointly edited by Albert E. Dien and Dennis Grafflin. Number 5 (1993) was edited by Kenneth Klein (University of Southern California).

⁵ The Chinese title of the journal *Early Medieval China* (hereafter *EMC*) is 中国中古研究. It was founded by Victor C. Xiong of Western Michigan University, who edited vols. 1–5. Cynthia L. Chennault of the University of Florida became editor in 2000, and Alan J. Berkowitz assumed the duty of book review editor. J. Michael Farmer has served as editor and book review editor since 2011, vol. 17. An electronic version of the journal, provided by Maney Publishing, is available online at the IngentaConnect website.

⁶ The focus of the published volume, *Culture and Power in the Reconstitution of the Chinese Realm, 200–600*, ed. Scott Pearce, Audrey Spiro, and Patricia Ebrey (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2001), was expanded from interaction with the ancient world to that between north and south, Buddhism and Daoism, and Chinese and Inner Asian.

⁷ The volumes are titled *Philosophy and Religion in Early Medieval China* (2010), and *Interpretation and Literature in Early Medieval China* (2011). Attendees from US universities were Alan J. Berkowitz, Steven Bokenkamp, Cai

Zongqi, Robert Ford Campany, Cynthia L. Chennault, David R. Knechtges, Victor H. Mair, Michael Nylan, Xiaofei Tian, and Brook Ziporyn. The first session, held in August 1980, was part of the “Fourth International Convention of Asia Scholars.” The second session, held in January of 2007 on the NUS campus, was hosted by the university’s Department of Philosophy and Department of Chinese Studies.

⁸The SEECR, founded in 1997 by Anne B. Kinney at the University of Virginia, is an organization of scholars from the south Atlantic region. The current president is Keith Knapp, a faculty member at the Citadel. A webpage is maintained by Jeffrey Richey of Berea College.

⁹The online bibliography is maintained by Kenneth Klein, director of the East Asian Library at the University of Southern California. Seven bibliographies, some accompanied by essays, have also appeared in EMCG publications.

Albert E. Dien, “Six Dynasties Bibliography in Western Languages, 1970–1980,” *Nan-Pei-Ch’ao Studies* 4 (1980); reprinted in *EMC* 5 (1999): 110–18.

Scott Pearce, “A Survey of Recent Research in Western Languages on the History of Early Medieval China,” *EMC* 1 (1994): 128–49.

Kenneth Klein, “Bibliography of Western Works on Early Medieval China, 1981–1993, Pt. 1,” *EMC* 1 (1994): 150–60.

Kenneth Klein, “Bibliography of Western Works on Early Medieval China, 1981–1993, Pt. 2,” *EMC* 2 (1995–96): 135–44.

Kenneth Klein, “Bibliography of Western Works on Early Medieval China, 1994–1996,” *EMC* 3 (1997): 110–16.

Cynthia L. Chennault, “An Annotated Bibliography of Western Works on Early Medieval China (1997–2001),” *EMC* 8 (2002): 99–136.

Kenneth Klein, “Bibliography of Western Works on Early Medieval China (2002–2009),” *EMC* 16 (2010): 67–90.

¹⁰ The “Six Dynasties” begins with the Three Kingdoms’ state of Wu (222–80) or, by alternate reckoning, with the Western Jin (266–317) and continues through the succession of southern dynasties based in Jiankang (Nanjing): the Eastern Jin (317–419), [Liu-]Song (420–79), Southern Qi (479–502), Liang (502–57), and Chen (557–89). In its original meaning, the “Northern and Southern Dynasties” excludes the Three Kingdoms, the Western Jin, and the Eastern Jin. The northern dynasties are the powerful Northern Wei of the Tuoba (420–534), the Eastern Wei (534–50) and its successor Northern Qi (550–77), the Western Wei (535–57) and its successor Northern Zhou (557–81), and the “Sixteen States” of lesser significance, which for the most part were also ruled by non-Han peoples. Chinese historians likewise apply the terms in both the narrow and broad meanings.

¹¹ The “Wei, Jin, Nanbeichao” 魏晋南北朝 begins with the Three Kingdoms’ state of Wei (220–66).

¹² Since studies concerning the Sui will be treated together with the Tang in the next essay in this volume, we take the Chen dynasty as the endpoint of our discussion about early medieval history and society. The descriptive term “*medieval*” (中世 or 中古) was first adopted by Japanese sinologists of the Kyōto School. For how they perceived the cultural character of medieval China to differ from previous and later ages, and for comparisons with stages of European history, see the article “<中国中世>再考” by Tanigawa Michio 谷川道雄, published in 1995 and translated by Victor Xiong as “Rethinking ‘Medieval China,’” *EMC* 3 (1997): 1–27. By borrowing the term “*medieval*” from European history, EMCG wishes to contextualize this epoch of Chinese history within larger structures of world history and to point out broad commonalities between the great classical

empires of the Eurasian world—Rome and the Han. Needless to say, there are profound differences as well: the Roman Empire was never reconstituted, and northern Europe, at least, lived for centuries in what has been termed a “dark age.” In China an empire was rebuilt that owed much to transformative developments during the centuries of division. Still, an important unity in the early medieval ages of China and Europe was that those who dwelt in the wreckage of empires were very aware of what once had been. Bearing on the question of why empire reappeared in East Asia but not in the Mediterranean world, a seminar titled “The First Great Divergence: China and Europe, 300–800 CE” was organized at Stanford University in April 2008 by Europeanists Ian Morris and Walter Scheidel. Attending on the East Asia side were Albert Dien, David Graff, and Scott Pearce.

¹³ Mark Edward Lewis, *China between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University 2009).

¹⁴ Albert Dien, *Six Dynasties Civilization*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, , 2007).

¹⁵ Andrew Eisenberg, *Kingship in Early Medieval China* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008).

¹⁶ Howard L. Goodman, *Ts'ao P'i Transcendent: The Political Culture of Dynasty-Founding in China at the End of the Han* (Seattle: Scripta Serica, 1998).

¹⁷ Robert Joe Cutter and William Gordon Crowell, *Empresses and Consorts: Selections from Chen Shou's Records of the Three States with Pei Songzhi's Commentary* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999).

¹⁸ Andrew Chittick, *Patronage and Community in Medieval China: The Xiangyang Garrison, 400–600 CE* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009).

¹⁹ David Graff, *Medieval Chinese Warfare, 300–900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

²⁰ See, for example, Albert Dien, “The Stirrup and Its Effect on Chinese Military History,” *Ars Orientalis* 16 (1986): 33–56; Albert Dien, “The Role of the Military in the Western Wei/Northern Chou State,” in *State and Society in Early Medieval China*, ed. Albert E. Dien, 331–67 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); John W. Killigrew, “The Reunification of China in AD 280: Jin's Conquest of Eastern Wu,” *EMC* 9 (2003): 1–34; Benjamin E. Wallacker, “Studies in Medieval Chinese Siegecraft: The Siege of Yüpi, AD 546,” *Journal of Asian History* 5.1 (1971): 35–54; and Scott Pearce, “Who, and What, Was Hou Jing?,” *EMC* 6 (2000): 49–73.

²¹ David G. Johnson, *The Medieval Chinese Oligarchy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977). His methodology is comparable to that of the influential work in two volumes by Mao Hanguang, *Liang Jin Nanbeichao shizhu zhengzhi zhi yanjiu* 两晋南北朝氏族政治制研究 (Taibei: Zhongguo xueshu zhushuo jiangchu weiyuan hui, 1966).

²² Patricia Ebrey, *The Aristocratic Families of Early Imperial China, a Case Study of the Poling Ts'ui family* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), reprinted in 2009. See also Patricia Ebrey, “Toward a Better Understanding of the Later Han Upper Class,” in Dien, *State and Society in Early Medieval China*, 49–72, in which she discusses the kinds of evidence by means of which we might better understand the class culture of the group known as *shi* 士.

²³ The long-lived lineage was the Taiyuan Wang 太原王. Grafflin notes, however, that the family members known after the late fifth century were residents of North China, being the descendants of a Wang who fled north when his relatives were annihilated. Dennis Grafflin, “The Great Family in Medieval South China,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 41.2 (1981): 54–67.

²⁴ See unnumbered note.

²⁵ Mark Edward Lewis summarizes essential differences during the fourth century in his *China Between Empires: The Northern and Southern Dynasties*. (53): “The powerful families in north China . . . [were] largely excluded from the courts of alien chieftains [and] they preserved themselves as leaders in their localities, maintaining Confucian values and literary traditions while also directing the communal self-defense forces that were essential in the north. They thereby preserved greater family unity and, perhaps, moral seriousness than the southern elite, but they lacked the court life, poetic circles, and cultivated airs of those who had followed the court south.”

²⁶ “*Choronym*” is the English-language term, used by Johnson and other scholars of the medieval elite, for the combination of ancestral home plus surname that identifies specific lineages, as in the Chinese practice.

²⁷ Richard B. Mather discusses a famous case of this practice in his article “Intermarriage as a Gauge of Family Status in the Southern Dynasties,” in Dien, et al., *State and Society in Early Medieval China*, 221–26.

²⁸ Richard B. Mather, *Shih-shuo hsin-yu: A New Account of Tales of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976). The revised edition was published by the Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 2002.

²⁹ Qian Nanxiu, *Spirit and Self in Medieval China: The Shih-shuo hsin-yu and Its Legacy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994).

³⁰ Charles Holcombe, *In the Shadow of the Han: Literati Thought and Society at the Beginning of the Southern Dynasties* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

³¹ Audrey Spiro, *Contemplating the Ancients: Aesthetic and Social Issues in Early Chinese Portraiture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

³² Keith Knapp, *Selfless Offspring: Filial Children and Social Order in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005). Knapp's study has been published in Japanese as *Mushi no kōshi: Chūgoku chūsei ni okeru kōshi to shakai chitsujō* 無私の孝子：中国中世における孝子と社会秩序, trans. Kuroda Akiko (Kyoto: Yōgakunokai, 2008).

³³ See Albert E. Dien, “Yen Chih-t'ui, a Buddho-Confucian,” in *Confucian Personalities*, ed. Arthur Wright and Denis Twitchett (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962): 44–64; “Instructions from the Grave: The Case of Yan Zhitui,” *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 8 (1995): 41–58; and “A Sixth-Century Father's Advice on Literature: Comments on Chapter Nine of the *Yanshi jiaxun*,” *Asia Major* 13.1 (2002): 65–82 (originally published as 评颜氏家训第九杖<文章>篇, in 魏晋南北朝文学论集, ed. Nanjing daxue Zhongguo yuwen wenxuexi [Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 1997], 599–613).

³⁴ Albert E. Dien, “Caravans and Caravan Leaders in Palmyra,” in *Les Sogdiens en Chine, Études Thematiques* 17, ed. Étienne de la Vaissière and Eric Trombert (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2005), 195–206 (translated into Chinese as 粟特人在中国: 历史, 考古, 语言的新探索, in 法国汉学10 [2005]: 88–100); and “Observations Concerning the Tomb of Master Shi,” *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 17 (2007): 105–15.

³⁵ Amy McNair, *Donors of Longmen: Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculpture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007).

³⁶ Stanley Abe, *Ordinary Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

³⁷ Dorothy Wong, *Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004); Ning Qiang, *Art, Religion, and Politics in Medieval China: The Dunhuang Cave of the Zhai Family* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

³⁸ A catalog of the exhibit by James C. Y. Watt, with contributions by An Jiaoyi and others, was published in 2004 by Yale University Press in association with the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For reports on the exhibit, see Victor C. Xiong, "China, Dawn of a Golden Age: 200–750 AD," *American Journal of Archaeology* 108.1 (2005): 1–10; and Guolong Lai, "'China, Dawn of a Golden Age: 200–750 AD' at the Metropolitan Museum of Art," *EMC* 12 (2006): 215–20.

³⁹ John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).

⁴⁰ Stephen Teiser, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); Chün-fang Yü, *Kuan-yin* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

⁴¹ Yi-t'ung Wang, trans., *A Record of the Buddhist Monasteries in Lo-Yang* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). The *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛阳伽蓝记, completed in 527, is commonly attributed to a certain Yang Xuanzhi 杨衒之, but his identity is uncertain. For questions surrounding the authorship, see pages xvi–xvii of Wang's introduction.

⁴² Katherine Ann Tsai, trans., *Biographies of Chinese Buddhist Nuns from the Fourth to Sixth Centuries*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994). Tsiang's translation is of the *Piqiuni zhuan* 比丘尼传, written circa 519 by Shi Baochang 释宝唱.

⁴³ Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Michel Strickmann, "The Mao Shan Revelations: Taoism and the Aristocracy," *T'oung Pao* 63.1 (1977): 1–64. A rough draft by Strickmann, who died young, has recently been edited by Bernard Faure and issued as *Chinese Poetry and Prophecy: The Written Oracle in East Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

⁴⁴ Stephen Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

⁴⁵ Christine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism, Face to Face* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 10. Mollier is a French scholar whose work on this book began when she was a visiting professor at the University of Chicago in 2002.

⁴⁶ Among the many works produced by Livia Kohn are *Daoism and Chinese Culture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); *Cosmos and Community: The Ethical Dimension of Daoism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005); and *Daoist Mystical Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007).

⁴⁷ Aat Vervoorn, *Men of the Cliffs and Caves: The Development of the Chinese Eremitic Tradition to the End of the Han Dynasty* (Shatin, NT, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1990). Vervoorn teaches at the Australian National University. His work is mentioned here because of its significance.

⁴⁸ Alan Berkowitz, *Patterns of Disengagement: The Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

⁴⁹ Robert Ford Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of Transcendents* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

⁵⁰ Victor C. Xiong, *Historical Dictionary of Medieval China*, "Historical Dictionaries of Ancient Civilizations and Historical Eras" (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2008).

⁵¹ Kenneth Klein, who maintains this online index, welcomes suggestions for additions to it at www.earlymedievalchinagroup.org.

Song Studies

Hilde De Weerd

Introduction

This essay surveys the history of Song studies in the North American academic world. It does not provide a full bibliography but rather highlights major contributions and recent developments in various fields of historical inquiry (for scholarship on Song art, literature, and religions, see also the essays on trends in these disciplines in the original and in the present volume). I understand American scholarship in a broad sense to include the work produced by scholars of differing nationalities in the United States and work done by those who once held affiliations with American universities and organizations but may now be teaching elsewhere, as well as work published in the United States and work with a significant impact on the US academic community. As the field of Song Studies in the United States was born in a climate of international cooperation, any attempt to reduce its history to a set of essential characteristics of a national academic tradition will prove misleading. Here, as elsewhere, some historians have had a more profound impact on the field than others and shaped the questions and methods of those who studied with them, but such affiliations have rarely been primarily based on national identity.

The Beginnings of Song Studies (1940s-1970s)

The establishment of the *Song Studies Newsletter* in 1970 marked a significant transition in the history of this chronological subfield of Chinese studies. Funded by the American Council of Learned Societies, the publication of the newsletter was at once recognition of the momentum that the field had gained over the course of the 1950s and 1960s and an investment in the expansion that was to follow in the 1970s and 1980s. In his bibliography of Western research on Song studies published between 1966 and 1970, Michael McGrath explained, “Because of the large number of pieces written in the past five years and the increasing rate of scholarly interest and writing about the Sung, it was felt that the service of providing a bibliography without annotation outweighed the desirability of producing a critical bibliography at some much later date.”¹ The sense of urgency palpable in McGrath’s introductory note to the list of about 150 titles (and updated later in issue 13 in 1977) may have been prompted by the sea change in scholarly output on Song history between the first half of the twentieth century and the decades that followed World War II.

The bibliographies of scholarship on Chinese studies before 1950 compiled by Henri Cordier, Yüan Tung-li, and John Lust list just over two dozen entries under the chronological subdivisions that include Song history. With very few exceptions the titles listed were published in European journals (predominantly French, German, and British). Similarly, Frank Shulman’s first bibliography of Western-language dissertations in Chinese studies suggests that doctoral dissertations on Song

history were exceptional in the United States throughout the 1950s; it was not until the 1960s that several institutions of higher learning graduated students whose main field of inquiry fell within the temporal boundaries of the Song dynasty. Several among the cohort who completed their dissertations in the 1960s became the progenitors of subsequent generations of Song, and, to a much lesser extent, Liao and Jin scholars. Most notable among them were Robert Hartwell (1932–96), who completed a dissertation on iron production at the University of Chicago in 1963; Tao Jin-sheng, who finished his project on the sinicization of Jurchen society at Indiana University in 1967; and Brian McKnight, whose dissertation on the Southern Song village service system, completed at the University of Chicago in 1968, was published by the University of Chicago Press three years later.

The groundwork for this expansion had been laid by a handful of scholars in the 1950s. At the University of Chicago, Edward Kracke (1908–76) encouraged research on Song political and socioeconomic history. *His Civil Service in Early Sung China (960–1067)* has remained an authoritative study on the Song civil service. This book and Kracke's articles have inspired much subsequent research on the imperial bureaucracy and the social history of the examinations, although scholars in the 1970s and 1980s (especially John Chaffee and Robert Hymes) have tended to question the methods used and conclusions drawn in his research on the social effects and meaning of the Song bureaucracy and the civil service examinations. At Princeton University, James T. C. Liu (1919–93) established another center for Song studies. Although Liu's interests covered a wide spectrum, his main contributions focused on the intellectual and political history of the Song period. His first two monographs on Wang Anshi's reforms (1959) and Ouyang Xiu (1967) illustrate that for Liu intellectual history was an engagement with the content of intellectual production covering many areas of social life (the political, literary, economic, and philosophical) and, at the same time, an investigation of both the internal and external reasons behind intellectual change. In *China Turning Inward*, published in 1988, Liu moved beyond the earlier case studies of Northern Song intellectual and political reform to write the only monographic interpretation of the intellectual history of the Song period as a whole. The thesis of the narrowing of intellectual horizons between the Northern and Southern Song periods captured in the title stands as irrefutable in the eyes of some, and, in the eyes of others, as a reminder of the fact that the range of Southern Song intellectual activity continues to be poorly represented in Song intellectual and cultural history. Intellectual history, especially the history of neo-Confucian thought, was the main focus of other early work in Song history in the 1950s and early 1960s. William Theodore de Bary, Wing-tsit Chan (1901–94), Conrad Schirokauer, and the public intellectual Carsun Chang (1886–1969) published articles and monographs introducing the intellectual biography and moral philosophy of Zhu Xi and those he inspired.

Before the establishment of a dedicated journal these pioneers attracted attention from colleagues inside and outside of Chinese history through contributions in the major general journals on imperial Chinese history, such as the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, and in edited volumes on imperial China, such as *Studies in Chinese Thought* (1953), *Chinese Social History* (1956), *Chinese Thought and Institutions* (1957), *Confucianism in Action* (1959), and *Confucian Personalities* (1962), volumes that acquired nearly canonical status over the following decades. For example, the essays on neo-Confucianism by William de Bary in the first volume and on Fan Zhongyan by James T. C. Liu in the third still serve as reference points in the field. In ways that have not been attempted in more recent decades the first generation

of Song scholars also reached out to the broader reading public and educators: in a series of slim volumes with short essays and translations (*Problems in Asian Civilizations*) they exposed the educated reader to key questions and differing interpretations in ongoing research. Key topics for debate were the interpretation of Wang Anshi's reforms (*Wang An-shih, Practical Reformer?*, 1963), the social effects of the examinations (*The Chinese Civil Service: Career Open to Talent?*, 1963), and the nature of change in Song society (*Change in Sung China: Innovation or Renovation?*, 1969).

Before turning to a more extended discussion of the last thirty years, it is worth noting that from the very outset the editors of the newsletter that came to represent Song studies defined the field as interdisciplinary in approach, cross-dynastic in temporal scope (including all political entities roughly coexistent with the Song dynasty), and international in its constituency. In the first issue Edmund Worthy noted that the establishment of the newsletter was prompted by the need to keep up with scholarship throughout the world, a response to the collaborative projects between European and Japanese centers of Song studies, and that the newsletter was open to contributions from anywhere. This spirit of internationalization was evident in the prime movers' collaboration in such projects as Yves Hervouet's *A Sung Bibliography* (1978), Herbert Franke's *Sung Biographies* (1976), and the publication of reference tools authored in the United States in the series associated with the Sung Project based in Paris (e.g., Kracke, 1957, 1978). The continued commitment in the Society for Song-Yuan Studies (which developed around the newsletter as it was transformed into the *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*) to the development of research tools for the wider academic community is evident in its publication and republication of such research aids as Hope Wright's *Geographical Names in Sung China: An Alphabetical List* (1956, 1992) and Peter Bol's *Sung Research Tools* (1990, 1996). The society meets during the annual meeting of the American Association for Asian Studies and is open to all with a research interest in Chinese history between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries.

State of the Field by Subject

General Surveys

Not until very recently have surveys dedicated to the history of Song society appeared in English.² Before the publication of *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 5, pt. 1: *The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors*, 907–1279 (2009), edited by the late Denis Twitchett (1925–2006) and Paul Jakov Smith, and Dieter Kuhn's *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China* (2009) readers had to turn to more general surveys in English such as Frederic Mote's (1922–2005) *Imperial China, 900–1800* (1999) or an English translation of the French historian' Jacques Gernet's *Le monde chinois* (1972) (translated as *A History of Chinese Civilization*, 1982) for an overview of Song political and cultural history. Alternatively, they could rely on Song histories in Chinese, Japanese, or German. With the arrival of these two monographs and the anticipated publication of the second, topical part of the *Cambridge History of China* (hereafter CHOC) volume on the Song dynasty in the near future this major gap has finally been filled. The Song volume, furthermore, is a welcome supplement to the volume on the Xia, Liao, Jin, and Yuan dynasties published fifteen years earlier (*The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 6: *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368*, 1994). The editors of this work, Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, combined in one sizable volume a political history of the principal forces successive Song regimes had

to contend with and a brief social history of life under Yuan rule. The bibliographic essays appended at the end of this volume may be somewhat outdated by now, but they still serve as a very helpful introduction to both the primary sources and secondary scholarship for research on Tangut, Khitan, Jurchen, and Mongol history.

Despite the obvious difference in size between volume 5 of the CHOC and Kuhn's handy survey (just the first part of the former is three times more voluminous than the latter, which is part of a recent series of monographic Chinese dynastic histories published by Harvard University Press), both works employ a similar approach. They are divided into two parts: a chronological survey of court political history followed by topical chapters addressing developments in the intellectual, socioeconomic, and cultural history of Song Chinese society (and some of the neighboring non-Chinese polities) between roughly 900 and 1279. The main strength of Kuhn's account of Song history is the vivid description of everyday life (chapters 7 and 12), production, commerce and taxation (chapters 10 and 11), and technology and urban history (chapters 8 and 9). Based on a wide range of secondary scholarship on textual and material sources, the text moves from common themes such as popular entertainment in the Song capitals to subject matter regularly overlooked in survey histories such as marriage practices, clothing, furniture, transportation, and health care. One of its main weaknesses, a political history that tends to reify the association of positive and negative personality traits with times of rise and decline, can be compensated for in the much richer detail of and wider variety of narrative voices in the political history of the Five Dynasties, Ten Kingdoms, and reigns of individual Song emperors in the CHOC.³

Social History

Local History

The most popular subfield in Song dynasty history during the 1980s was social history. Robert Hartwell's research and teaching at the University of Pennsylvania was a powerful influence on an emerging interest in social and local history. A number of his articles, most notably "Demographic, Political, and Social Transformations of China, 750–1550," transformed the field of Song history.

In this article Hartwell argued, based on a large sample of population and biographical data, that demographic changes (especially the shift of the population toward Southeast China) and the restructuring of the administrative apparatus (the empowerment of the county at the lowest level of the administrative subdivision and the centralization of supervisory power in a small number of new regional offices as opposed to the much larger number of prefectures) paralleled transformations in the social and political leadership of the Chinese empire. He concluded that during the late eleventh and early twelfth century a professional elite specializing in government service and constituted of a cohesive and exclusive group of families gave way to local gentry lineages that considered government service one among several strategies employed to acquire and maintain social and political status.⁴

Hartwell's broad hypotheses about the demographic, social, economic, and political changes in Chinese history between the Tang and Ming dynasties were further elaborated in the work of a number of students who studied under him at the University of Pennsylvania. Robert Hymes's (Columbia University) *Statesmen and Gentlemen* (1986), which aimed to demonstrate a reorientation

from court-centered to localist strategies among the elites of Fuzhou 撫州 (Jiangxi 江西), along with the work on regional systems and local history undertaken by anthropologists and historians of later imperial Chinese society such as William Skinner (1925?–2008) and Hilary Beattie, have continually inspired further research into the differences and similarities in the historical trajectories of local communities.

Before Robert Hymes wrote his dissertation in 1979 and published it in 1986, few attempts to write the history of local communities in Song times had been undertaken outside of Japan. Twenty years later and after the publication of studies on Sichuan 四川 (Winston Lo and Richard von Glahn), Wuzhou 婺州 (Beverly Bossler), Quanzhou 泉州 (Billy So), Ji'an 吉安 (Anne Gerritsen), Huizhou 徽州 (Harriet Zurndorfer and Liu Hsiang-kwang), Jianning 建寧 (Lucille Chia and Bettine Birge), southern Fujian and the Mulan Valley (Hugh Clark), and Mingzhou 明州 (Shiba Yoshinobu, Richard Davis, Linda Walton, and Lee Sukhee) it has become clear not only that local history can be done within the constraints of available source materials (both textual and material) but also that more such studies (especially on areas outside of the southeast coast and Sichuan and on aspects of local society barely touched on, like environmental and economic change) are needed to reconstruct a broader picture of what kinds of hierarchies and dynamics of social ties structured local societies across the empire and how their relationships with regional and empire-wide systems were created, maintained, or lost. As the more recent contributions to local (elite) history demonstrate, much debate remains regarding the extent and meaning of local versus long-distance marriage ties, the relationship between local elites and (local) government, or the role of settlers in local society and regional systems. Moreover, even though some of these studies reach back to the period between the eighth and tenth centuries (Clark), there remains a significant gap in our understanding of the transition from the late Tang through the early Song period. How we understand elite society between the late Tang through the early Song period (a question taken up in Nick Tackett's 2006 dissertation) should also significantly factor into our interpretation of the localist turn between the Northern and Southern Song.

Urban History

The attractions of the Song capitals Kaifeng 開封 and Hangzhou 杭州 were not only irresistible to those who commemorated them in Song times; the nostalgia for the variety and excitement of capital life has also captured the imagination of those who read or were assigned in courses the English translation of Jacques Gernet's *La vie quotidienne en Chine, à la veille de l'invasion mongole, 1250–1276* (1959) (translated as *Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion, 1250–1276*, 1962). The ordinary and not so ordinary lives of the denizens of the capitals have also been discussed in various articles by Stephen West (see Ronald Egan's essay on Song literature in this volume). The best book-length study contrasting the capitals of the Tang and Song dynasties is C. K. Heng's *Cities of Aristocrats and Bureaucrats* (1999). Earlier work on urban history focused on the relationships between commercialization and urbanization in a variety of geographical settings (Shiba, 1970, 1975; Ma, 1971; Su, 2000).

Gender and Family

The ups and downs of particular families and clans are an important narrative theme in the local histories listed above. Only in rare cases, however, do they become the focus of analysis (Davis,

1996; Clark, 2007). The strategies employed in the construction and maintenance of family and clan cohesion, such as the compilation of genealogies, the establishment of communal graveyards or charity funds, and the theory and practice of family rituals, are examined more generally in the monographs, translations, and edited volumes of Patricia Ebrey (1984, 1991; 1986; 2002). An important critique of the methodology used and conclusions drawn in this body of work, albeit one whose hyperbole and pedantry only Dutch clergymen could appreciate, is Christian de Pee's multifaceted study of wedding ritual (2007).

Gender history in the form of the history of women, as well as the construction of femininity and masculinity, has become an area of interest since the 1970s. Early work focused on the history of court women (Chung, 1981, based on a 1977 dissertation completed at the University of Pennsylvania). Studies completed in the 1990s examined female roles in a wider range of social settings and were also particularly interested in the question of the impact of neo-Confucian principles on women's lives (Birge, 2002, based on a 1992 dissertation completed at Columbia University; Ebrey, 1993; Katkov, 1997). Besides the works on family ritual discussed above, changing perceptions of femininity and masculinity are also a major theme in Richard Davis's cultural history of Song loyalism (1996). Charlotte Furth explores gender in Song medical literature in *A Flourishing Yin: Gender in China's Medical History, 960–1665* (1999). Francesca Bray's *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China* (1997) examines gender roles and representations of gender in Chinese medicine and technology.

Daily Routines

Moving beyond family and interfamily relationships and the better-documented routines of the residents of the capitals, some historians have examined how routine transactions were conducted in various locales throughout the empire. Valerie Hansen's study of contracts (1995) demonstrates that written contracts became essential means for conducting business and reaching agreements among men and women of various occupations and different social standing; they were also used as persuasive, albeit not necessarily conclusive, evidence in legal cases.

Economic History

Economic history had become a subject of interest by the 1960s, as evidenced in Hartwell's articles on coal, the iron and steel industries, and the monetary system, as well as in the research tools he compiled: *A Guide to Sources of Chinese Economic History, A.D. 618–1368* (1964); and *Tribute Missions to China, 960–1126* (1983). At Harvard University Yang Lien-sheng (1924?–1990) published on Song paper currency (1953) and also inspired work on Song economic history and political economy. The publication in 1973 of Mark Elvin's *The Pattern of the Chinese Past* and his aforementioned translation of Shiba Yoshinobu's work on commercialization and urbanization left a profound imprint on subsequent historiography on Chinese economic history.

Government Monopolies

As in the Chinese and Japanese historiography on Song economic history, the government monopolies in salt (Chien, 2004), iron, tea (Smith, 1991), and alcohol (Golas, 1972) have attracted a considerable

amount of interest. Not only are the data on monopolies better preserved, but they also provide valuable insight into the changing political economy of the Song state. As shown in the work of Paul Smith, for example, monopolies became a crucial source of income for the state and bureaucratic entrepreneurs.

Political Economy

Fiscal policy and its role in the stimulation and erosion of economic growth have been a recurring interest among Song historians. Besides the early work by Hartwell and Yang and the work on government monopolies mentioned above, there have been several dedicated studies of government accounting (Fu, 1968) and monetary policy and its effects (von Glahn, 1996, 2006). Broader comparisons between the Song state's economic goals and its relation to markets with later Chinese governments, as well as European regimes, appear in the work of R. Bin Wong (1997) and Liu Guanglin (2005).

Trade

The transformation of Chinese society in Song times examined in the social and economic histories listed above would have been impossible without the expansion of domestic and maritime trade. These topics, especially the Song economy's maritime reach, began to merit the attention of Chinese historians in the postwar era. As early as 1957 Lo Jung-pang (1912–81) wrote a dissertation on Song naval power, followed in 1969 by an article on the relationship between Song trade and its navy. Lo continued to work on a study of imperial Chinese maritime enterprises until his death, and an edited version of this work has recently been completed.⁵ In 1966 an earlier translation of one of the few Chinese sources to document the maritime trade, Zhao Rugua's 趙汝适 memoir on his time in office as a customs inspector in the early thirteenth century in the port of Quanzhou (*Zhufan zhi* 諸蕃志), was republished in the United States (Hirth, and Rockhill, 1912, 1966). Studies on the commercial transformation of Fujian and its maritime trade followed in due course (Clark, 1991; Su, 2000). Unlike the local and interregional domestic trade examined in the work of Shiba Yoshinobu, foreign trade has continued to attract the attention of younger and senior researchers as demonstrated in the recent flurry of dissertations (Vivier, 2008; Park, 2008) and articles (Chaffee, 2001, 2006; Clark, 2001). Trade with Southeast and South Asia and diasporic communities in those areas have been examined by E. Edwards McKinnon (1984) and Tansen Sen (2003, 2006).

Agriculture

Agricultural developments are surveyed in Golas, "Rural China in the Song" (1980). The relationship between economic growth and water conservancy projects is explored in the dissertations of John R. Stuermer (1980) and Mira Ann Mihelich (1979).

Intellectual History

Song intellectuals and intellectual movements figured prominently in the early Song studies literature. Around the 1980s intellectual history was no longer primarily the study of the individual lives of prominent philosophers supplemented by an analysis of key contributions; Chinese historians, adapting trends within the broader community of intellectual historians, included broader socioeconomic

developments on either a local or an empire-wide scale in their explanations of intellectual change and also turned to the infrastructure of knowledge transmission (including education, ritual, printing, and reading practices).

Biographies

Intellectual biography has been an established genre in the field and has frequently proven to be an apt vehicle for unraveling both the intellectual trajectories of individuals and the intellectual interactions that helped chart those trajectories. The biographies of Ye Shi 葉适 (Lo, 1974) and Chen Liang 陳亮 (Tillman, 1982), for example, reconstruct the meaning and significance of the contributions of their subjects by casting them in the role of participants in wider debates; as biographies of lesser-known Southern Song public figures, these biographies also cast some doubt on James Liu's characterization of the Southern Song as the age of "the turn inward."

Several of the major thinkers who were retrospectively made part of Zhu Xi's lineage of the Learning of the Way (道學) have also been the subject of individual biographies that also deserve mention in this context: Shao Yong 邵雍 (Wyatt, 1996), Zhang Zai 張載 (Kasoff, 1984), Xie Liangzuo 謝良佐 (Selover, 2005), and Zhu Xi 朱熹 himself (Gardner, 1986, 1990; Tillman, 1992; Chan, 1987, 1989; the slightly revised edition of A. C. Graham's study of Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤 by Open Court (*Two Chinese Philosophers: The Metaphysics of the Brothers Ch'êng*, 1967, 1992)). Biographical accounts have also been written of Zhu Xi's contemporaries (Foster on Lu Jiuyuan, 1997), and of disciples and later disseminators of the Learning of the Way (Chu Ron-guey's on Zhen Dexiu's 真德秀 life and political thought, 1988, and Chan's study and translation of Chen Chun's 陳淳 Neo-Confucian glossary, 1986).

Those who gained fame for their literary skill (e.g., Su Shi 苏轼 and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修) or their political careers (e.g., Sima Guang 司馬光) have appealed to biographers in the United States as to those abroad; literary biographies are discussed further in Ronald Egan's essay on Song literature in this volume, and political biographies are discussed in the section on political history below. Northern Song figures who seemed not to fit the mold have received some (but less sustained) attention, as in Xie Shanyuan's 謝善元 brief account of Li Gou's 李覲 life (1979).

Intellectual Movements

de Bary's work on the key characteristics and major representatives of neo-Confucianism were until the 1980s a point of departure for all with an interest in neo-Confucian thinking between the Song and Ming periods (e.g., 1959, 1981, 1989). Despite the acrimonious debate between Tillman and de Bary regarding the best terminology with which to designate the movement that from the eleventh century onward aimed at an overhaul of intellectual culture through a rediscovery and redefinition of the classical tradition, both de Bary's "Neo-Confucianism" and Tillman's "Learning of the Way" (or Tao-hsueh) remain meaningful terms for describing in general the diachronic and cross-cultural dimensions of the movement, or for tracking the origins and history of those who affiliated with more narrowly defined intellectual lineages, respectively (Tillman, 1992, 1994; de Bary, 1993, 1994). Moreover, even though the latter choice reflects the desire to adopt a more historicist approach for the analysis of the development of neo-Confucian thinking, both Tillman and later adopters of the

new terminology continue to use the term in ways that do not reflect contemporary twelfth-century usage (De Weerd, 2007a).

Moving beyond the discussion of internal philosophical debates, intellectual historians since James Liu have also aimed at an explanation for the spread of neo-Confucian beliefs and practices in spite of its rather unpromising beginnings in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (1973). In his survey of the intellectual transition from the late Tang through the Northern Song (1992) and more elaborately in his latest work on the history of neo-Confucianism through the Ming period (2008), Peter Bol has sought to integrate the findings of social historians on the reorientation of elite strategies with the theoretical arguments made by successive generations of neo-Confucian thinkers.

As far as the intellectual history of other groups of intellectuals is concerned, efforts have mostly been devoted to the tenth- and eleventh-century *guwen* 古文 thinkers (Bol, 1992; Skonicki, 2007) and local affiliations such as the Yongjia 永嘉 (Pu, 1998; Chu, 1998; Song, 2007) and Guanzhong 關中 traditions (Ong, 2008).

Classical Commentary and Ritual

Knowledge of the classics and classical commentary was, like poetry, an essential component of civilized exchange in imperial China. As examined in more detail in Shao Dongfang's essay in the original Chinese edition, intellectual historians in the United States have examined the ways in which classical commentary structured understandings of and debates about moral philosophy, human life, history, literature, and politics. Among the Five Classics, *The Book of Songs* 詩經, *The Changes* 易經, and *The Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋 have received the most attention; in addition, those chapters from *The Records on Ritual* 禮記 that were central to the neo-Confucian canon, *The Great Learning* 大學 and *The Doctrine of the Mean* 中庸, have also been subjected to in-depth analysis. Several of the authors and titles mentioned in the previous two sections touch on their subjects' understanding of classical texts: Daniel Gardner has systematically examined and illuminated Zhu Xi's reworking of earlier versions and interpretations of the Four Books (also 2003, 2007); and Song Jaeyoon writes about the role of commentary on *The Rituals of Zhou* 周禮 in Southern Song discussions of political philosophy. Social historians writing on family rituals have also translated and interpreted Zhu Xi's reworking of ritual texts (Ebrey, 1993; de Pee, 2007).

In his select overview of commentary on *The Book of Songs* Steven van Zoeren includes a chapter on Zhu Xi's observations on that classic (1990). The edited volume, *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I-Ching* (1991), contains chapters on the uses of *The Changes* among key Song thinkers; the authors writing on Cheng Yi's and Zhu Xi's interpretations of it also wrote more extensively on the topic (Smith, 1979; Adler, 2002).

Focusing on the relationship between classical commentary and political discourse, Alan Wood and Hon Tze-ki read classical commentary on *The Spring and Autumn Annals* and *The Changes* as vehicles for literati empowerment vis-à-vis imperial power. In *Limits to Autocracy: From Sung Neo-Confucianism to a Doctrine of Political Rights* (1995) Wood argues that approaches to that classic moved from an analysis of the moral and universal meaning of ritual (*li* 禮) in the commentaries of Sun Fu to the application and elaboration of the metaphysics of pattern (*li* 理) in the commentaries of Cheng Yi and Hu Anguo; the latter approach fed into a philosophy of natural law that functioned as a limitation

to imperial power. Hon suggests that despite the significant differences among successive generations of Northern Song interpreters of *The Changes*, they shared a spirit of political activism, the literati belief in and aspiration for co-rulership of the empire (2005).

Education

Public and private educational institutions, as well as their relationship, went through ups and downs as documented in the work of Thomas H. C. Lee (esp. 1985, 2000) and Linda Walton (1999). The edited volume *Neo-Confucian Education: The Formative Stage* (de Bary, Chaffee, and Birge, 1989) brings together a range of articles that, despite the somewhat misleading title, discuss religious and female, as well as more specifically neo-Confucian, education. Studies on the civil service examinations by John Chaffee and Hilde De Weerd (discussed below) also discuss the institutions of higher learning and examination curricula.

The Dissemination of Books and Reading

Given that the Song period constitutes the first age in global history from which significant numbers of printed books have come down to us, it should come as no surprise that historians of the book, as well as intellectual and social historians, have shown a growing interest in the spread and the uses of print in Song times. The first systematic overview of Song printing, and still an essential reference work for those with an interest in the subject, was Mingsun Poon's "Books and Printing in Sung China (960–1279)" (1979). The commercial printing establishments in Hangzhou and Jianning have been the subject of two other well-documented studies (Edgren, 1989; Chia, 2002). The intellectual and political implications of the uses of print have been highlighted in recent work by Hilde De Weerd (e.g., 2007 a-b, 2009a-b). Two recent workshops (Harvard University, 2004 and 2007) on the early cultural history of printing and books have resulted in the compilation of an edited volume with essays on collecting; the uses of print in the dissemination of political, historical, religious, and technical knowledge; and the interaction between print and other media (Chia and De Weerd, 2011).

Private as well as government collecting, lending, and pilfering are discussed in studies by John Winkelman (1974), Thomas Lee (1995), Joseph McDermott (2006), and Hilde De Weerd (2006, 2009a).

Historiography

Most Song historians have to consult either the grand court archival compilations or the comprehensive historical works composed privately. Yet relatively little work has been done on the history of historiography. Achilles Fang's and Richard Davis's translations of the work of two famous Song historians (Ouyang Xiu and Sima Guang) provide a taste of the original (*The Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms*, 1952; *Historical Records of the Five Dynasties*, 2004). Charles Hartman's meticulous studies of Southern Song histories (1998, 2001, 2003), as well as the works by Naomi Standen (2007), Jennifer Jay (1991), and Ari Levine (2008), discussed further below, highlight and dissect the oftentimes complex layerings of the primary texts with which we work. A broad selection of Song historians and historical texts are discussed in the essays edited by Thomas Lee in *The New and the Multiple: Sung Senses of the Past* (2004). The didactic aspects of Sima Guang's historiography are the subject of Robert

Lafleur's dissertation (1996). Lee Tsunghan's recent study provides insight into the transmission and transformation of historiographical paradigms on the basis of an examination of adaptations of the *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 model (2008). Sung Chia-fu's 2010 dissertation critically examines the contexts within which *Zizhi tongjian* emerged and the models and practices against which it was defined; this work powerfully underscores the importance of a better understanding of the history of historiography to all historians.

Technical Knowledge

The pages of the many volumes of Joseph Needham's *Science and Civilisation in China* project are filled with the contributions of Song inventors and transmitters of technical knowledge. Dedicated studies have been far fewer. The organization of medical knowledge and the state's involvement in it have been discussed in works by T. J. Hinrichs (2003) and Asaf Goldschmidt (2009), as well as the aforementioned work by Furth and Bray. Rulan Chao Pian's early study of Song music remains a classic in the field (1967), and Ulrich Libbrecht's study of Song mathematics remains one of the rare titles on Song mathematics published in the United States (1973). Peter Golas has worked on mining and the nature and the role of technical drawings (e.g., 2003). Scholarship on Song cartography is discussed further below.

Religious History

During the 1990s Song dynasty historians turned to local religion. As opposed to scholars of religion discussed in a separate essay, who have long worked on particular texts and sects in their integrity or analyzed discrete religious practices such as hagiography and festivals, social historians who turned to religious practices have situated their research primarily in the context of the history and anthropology of Buddhism, Daoism, and local religion. They share an interest in the diversity of local religious practice, which they deem irreducible to the general categories of Daoism and Buddhism, and in the role of elites in the spread of local religion, even though they disagree on the makeup of the elites. Most also frame their work in the context of broader historical questions and specifically place it in the context of the Tang-Song transition. Finally, they also draw from common source material. Hong Mai's *Record of the Listener* (*Yijian zhi* 夷堅志) has been especially useful to social and cultural historians, even though their uses and readings of this collection of reports and stories differ substantially.

Valerie Hansen's *Changing Gods in Medieval China, 1127–1276* (1990) was the first systematic study of Song dynasty local religion (or “popular religion” in her terms). Hansen relates the changes in the nature of the gods and in their relationships with human beings sketched in her work to the localist turn and the commercialization of Song society. Robert Hymes's *Way and Byway: Taoism, Local Religion, and Models of Divinity in Sung and Modern China* (2002) is in some ways an extension of his earlier work on the elites of Fuzhou 撫州. In Hymes's analysis of the differing models for Chinese representations of divinity and human relationships with the divine, the worship of the Huagai 華蓋 immortals among Southern Song and Yuan elites represents their self-definition as local elites and implies a rejection of bureaucratic models and bureaucratic power. Similarly, in her longer-term examination of elite perceptions of sacred spaces and temples in Ji'an, Anne Gerritsen argues that during the Southern

Song and Yuan religious sites were primarily venues for the celebration of local belonging (2007). In *The Sinister Way: The Divine and the Demonic in Chinese Religious Culture* (2004), Richard von Glahn defines laypersons' reliance on direct channels of communication with local gods as one of the major characteristics of "the Song transformation of Chinese religious culture" and calls this development "the vernacularization of ritual." Song vernacular religion, a language shared locally that continuously interacts with the classical liturgical traditions of Daoism and Buddhism or state religion, can thus also be read as an elaboration of the localist paradigm through the investigation of Song local religion.

In contrast, Edward Davis (2001) rejects the Tang-Song transition paradigm because it represents in his reading a linear and teleological view projecting social change between the Tang and Song dynasties as the progress of "the Confucian elite" toward social and cultural hegemony. He proposes instead to focus on tensions among social, political, and religious groups in the construction of syncretic popular religious rituals.

Mark Halperin's examination of Tang and Song literati inscriptions for Buddhist sites (2006) notes that there was a shift in focus from Tang to Song but that shift mainly entailed a diversification of literati responses ranging from rejection, the celebration of imperial shrines, and their role as depositories of learning to the acknowledgment of the protection of the dharma and of the personal comfort that temples and shrines provide. Liao Hsien-huei emphasizes the continuity and pervasiveness of elite religious beliefs and practices on the basis of an analysis of prayers of help with examination success, divination, and elite interpretations of demonic forces (2001). The history and multiple meanings of shrine building within the neo-Confucian tradition is examined in a similar vein in Ellen Neskár's dissertation (1993).

Political History

Government Institutions and Legal History

Institutional history had some early and dedicated practitioners as is evident in the work of Edward Kracke (esp. 1953), Brian McKnight (1972), and Winston Lo (1982, 1987) already mentioned above. McKnight has continued to specialize in legal history, producing both translations of well-known Song legal texts (1981, 1999) and studies of Song legal traditions and practices (1981, 1992).

In recent years social historians have turned to legal and institutional history, forging connections between the normative descriptions of official documents, on the one hand, and social change, social differentiation, and cultural constructions of social realities in legal texts on the other. John Chaffee's *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: A Social History of the Examinations* (1985, 1995) captures in its title the author's goal to examine the social dimensions of an institution that had until that point been primarily conceived of, in the context of Song history, as an instrument of political centralization and imperial autocracy. In his study of the dynastic clan (1999) Chaffee similarly shows how the Song understanding and management of the imperial clan as a political institution can be best examined through the social, political, and cultural activities of clan members. Social historians have also turned to legal cases and legal handbooks for the window they provide into family relationships, daily transactions, and power relations at the local level—or at least the representations thereof (e.g., Ebrey, 1993; Hansen, 1995; Birge, 2002; de Pee, 2007).

The territorial administration of the Song empire has been examined in the dissertations of Michael McGrath (1982) and Ruth Mostern (2011).

Narrative Political History and Political Biography

James Liu's aforementioned studies on eleventh-century reform and Song intellectual history are set in the context of factional struggle and thus provide a political narrative constructed through the lens of factional alliance. Political narratives of selected periods of Song history, especially the first Northern and Southern Song emperors, exist in the form of dissertations (Worthy, 1976; Lau, 1986; Hsu 2000), but it was not until the publication earlier this year of the first part of volume 5 of the CHOC that a coherent and comprehensive political history has become available in English.

Political biography, typically in the form of a study of the political thought of individuals, has been a persistent if small genre in the field of Song political history. Starting with the studies of the political thought of Zhu Xi (Schirokauer, 1960), Sima Guang (Sariti, 1970), Ye Shi (Lo, 1974), and Chen Liang (Tillman, 1982), and continuing with more recent work on the politics of Zhen Dexiu (Chu, 1988) and Sima Guang (Ji, 2005), the systematic analysis of the careers and thoughts of individuals has proven to be fundamental in the reconstruction of Song politics. Even though the edited volume on Emperor Huizong 徽宗 does not constitute a biography in the conventional sense of the word, the thirteen essays in a volume edited by Patricia Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics* (2006) draw a composite picture of the multifaceted political and cultural interests of an emperor and his entourage.⁶

The Social and Cultural History of Politics

The dominance of social history questions and methods in the 1980s extended to the study of Song politics. Richard Davis (1986) and Beverly Bossler (1998) share an interest in the social history of political elites. Even though their works thus overlap with the social histories of Song elites written by Hartwell and Hymes, their primary focus on families at the pinnacle of the Song political hierarchy and the continuity of the strategies employed by these families throughout the Song period results in a partial critique of the localist paradigm at the heart of the social history of the 1980s.

Apart from providing a stimulus to the social history of top-ranking officials, the localist paradigm also generated research into elite conceptualizations of the state and the relationship between state and society. A volume edited by Robert Hymes and Conrad Schirokauer, *Ordering the World: Approaches to State and Society in Song Dynasty China* (1993), was in part a continuation of the scholarship on the social transformation of the elite: it explains the reconceptualization of state and society that attended the changing social strategies of Song elites. It was also a new departure from previous social and political history. The editors situated the volume not only in the context of debates within Song history (the localist paradigm) or late imperial history (the relationship between state and society) but also called for more systematic analysis of the political languages of Song literate elites. One attempt to pursue this line of inquiry is Ari Levine's analysis of Northern Song factionalist discourse (2008).

Richard Davis's *Wind against the Mountain: The Crisis of Politics and Culture in Thirteenth-Century China* (1996) was an early outgrowth of the author's research for and drafts of the three CHOC chapters on the last reigns of the Southern Song dynasty. Here Davis ties political history to cultural history

by describing cases of Song loyalism as expressions of cultural anxieties. Through its embrace of cultural history in the analysis of politics, *Wind against the Mountain* marks a subtle shift from the social history of Song politics to the analysis of political culture. It was also the first in a series of publications examining the meanings of loyalty and loyalism in middle period political culture.

In 1965 Wang Gungwu had already identified loyalism, defined as an exclusive sense of loyalty to the reigning dynasty, as a political value that was expressed first in the writing of eleventh-century Song historians (1965). Jennifer Jay's *A Change in Dynasties: Loyalism in Thirteenth-Century China* (1991) is a study of the divergent expressions of loyalism between 1273 and 1300. In contrast to the stereotype of the Song loyalist as an uncompromising and antiforeign defender of the Song cause, Jay portrays characters whose loyalty is aimed at different objects, expressed in contradictory ways, and subject to regional variation. Like Jay, Naomi Standen discusses historiographic shifts in the representation of loyalty in contemporary and later biographical writing (2007). Unlike Jay, she concludes that as the border became more clearly defined and separated two instead of more competing regimes, a process that culminated in the Treaty of Shanyuan 澶淵 between Song and Liao in 1005, loyalty came to be defined more and more in ethnic terms.

More recent work further considers the impact of government regulations and institutions on the cultural practices of Song elites. Zhang Cong's work on travel in Song times (2011) discusses the travel of officials, as well as the varied uses of the government institutions and networks designed to facilitate travel. T. J. Hinrichs's dissertation (2003), discusses the Song state's attempts to transform healing practices through the compilation, printing, and distribution of medical texts and the creation of state institutions for health care and medical training. Hilde De Weerd (2007a) approaches the civil service examinations as a bounded cultural space within which representatives of the state and literati in various capacities negotiate standards for examination preparation. As an analysis of the intellectual history of examination preparation, it opens up new ways in which to view an institution typically associated with the centralization of imperial power during the Song dynasty.

Foreign Affairs

Throughout its three-hundred-year history, the Song state faced geopolitical challenges that shaped its domestic politics. According to some researchers the Song state also developed innovative ways to deal with the principal contenders along its northern and western borders. Some of the essays in *China among Equals* (1983), a volume on the Song state's relations with and perceptions of neighboring states edited by Morris Rossabi, demonstrate how in treaties and diplomatic exchanges successive Song regimes adopted a stance at variance with the stereotypical superiority complex of the Middle Kingdom. Tao Jing-shen (1988) and David Curtis Wright (2005) similarly emphasize the shift to a politics of diplomatic parity in the Song state's dealings with the Liao empire. Apart from the French and German historiography on the subject, ambassadors' records have also been translated and studied by James Hargett (1984), Melvin Ang (1983), Wright (1998), and Walton (2002). Questions regarding the reception history of these materials and the broader literati discourse on foreign states and the Song court's negotiations with them remain to be explored. An exception is Charles Peterson (1975) who explored reactions to the rise of Mongol power.

The CHOC volumes 5 and 6 discuss in some detail the internal history of the Tangut, Kitan, Jurchen, and Mongol polities, as well as their confrontations and interactions with Song governments. In addition the monographs by Ruth Dunnell (1996), Naomi Standen (2007), Tao Jing-shen (1977), and Chan Hok-lam (1984) and the volume edited by Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Stephen H. West (1995), are representative of the state of the field of Xia, Liao, and Jin history.

Apart from the studies mentioned in the section on foreign trade above, relations with southern states are also discussed in James Anderson's work (2007). Relations with Tibetan domains are, besides the contribution on the topic in *China among Equals*, also discussed in Paul Smith's essay on the annexation of Tibetan domains in Hehuang (the Qinghai-Gansu Highlands) in the late Northern Song period (2006).

Military History

The historiography on Song military history has, not surprisingly, focused on the dynasty's high and low points. The campaigns that consolidated the Song state under Taizu 太祖 and Taizong 太宗, the gradual shift from military to civilian rule, and the military organization of the early Song state have received attention in the work of Peter Lorge (1996, 2005), John Labadie (1981), Fang Cheng-Hua (2001), and Yang Li (2004), as well as in the CHOC, volume 5. The military defeat of the Song at the hands of the Mongol armies has been recounted in Richard Davis's work (1996) and Yuan historiography (e.g., Rossabi, 1988; see also Birge, "Yuan Studies" in this volume). Military biographies are less common, but both Yue Fei 岳飛 and Han Shizhong 韓世忠 have left their stamp on the field in Edward Kaplan's lengthy biography of the most famous of early Southern Song generals (1970) and in Wang Xueliang's portrait of the equally tragic career of Han Shizhong (2000).

Among the handful of edited volumes on frontiers and military culture to have been published in recent years, Don J. Wyatt's *Battlefronts Real and Imagined: War, Border, and Identity in the Chinese Middle Period* (2008) is notable for its range of contributions on the infrastructure of defense, the ideology of war and peace, the impact of battle, and the art of negotiation in Song times. Military technology is discussed in *Science and Civilization in China*, vol. 5: *Chemistry and Chemical Technology VI: Military Technology* (1994).

Historical Geography

The history of Song cartography has drawn the attention of geographers, as well as Song historians. *Cartography in the Traditional East and Southeast Asian Societies* edited by J. B. Harley and David Woodward (1994) surveys Song maps and mapping techniques. Moving away from empire maps to local administrative maps, Hu Bangbo has examined maps and mapping conventions in early printed gazetteers (1994). The use of maps by the Song state is further examined in Ruth Mostern's work (2011). The reception history of Song empire maps has been examined by De Weerd (2009b). The cross-cultural dimensions of mapping and its relations to trade is the subject of a recent dissertation (Park, 2008).

Future research on historical geography, as well as its application in socioeconomic and political historical projects, will be much facilitated by the China Historical GIS (CHGIS) project, an

international project spearheaded by Harvard University's Peter Bol and Lex Berman, which aims to provide geographical datasets to support its use in Chinese humanities and social science projects (<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~chgis/>). The data used in Mostern's work have also been made available at <http://songgis.ucmercedlibrary.info/>.

Digital Humanities and Future Prospects

In addition to the CHGIS project, the China Biographical Database Project (CBDB), based at Harvard University and originating from a data model and data compiled by Robert Hartwell, is also inspiring new methods and questions in research on Song social, political, and cultural history. To date the database already contains prosopographic data for well over twenty thousand Song men and women (<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k16229&pageid=icb.page76535>).

This broad survey of the history of Song studies in the United States has underscored both its recent beginnings and the ample and diverse results achieved thus far. The expansion of the Song studies community since the 1980s suggests that this diversity will continue to grow in the years ahead. Old questions regarding the Tang-Song transition, the localist turn, the impact and uses of printing, the political economy of the Song state, and its status among East Asian states will continue to stimulate debate, while other areas of research, including environmental history and the history of technology, require more input from Song historians. Long-term and comparative studies along the lines suggested by the contributors to *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition* (Smith and von Glahn, 2003) or R. Bin Wong's work on comparative political economy will hopefully also appear with greater frequency in the next fifty years of US Song studies.

Notes

Hilde De Weerdt (PhD, Harvard University, 1998) teaches Chinese history at King's College London. Her past and current research focuses on imperial political culture, information technologies, social networks, and intellectual history. She has published a monograph on the intellectual history of the civil service examinations (2007) and edited a volume on the early cultural history of printing with Lucille Chia (2011). She is also the co-author of a research guide for Song Studies (宋代研究工具書刊指南—修訂版, 2008).

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¹Michael McGrath, "Bibliography of Western Language Sources on the Sung, 1966–1970," *Song Studies Newsletter* 3 (1971): 38.

²Some of the following sections, especially those on religious and political history, are based in part on Hilde De Weerdt, "Recent Trends in American Research in Song Dynasty History."

³This discussion is based in part on Hilde De Weerdt, "The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China by Dieter Kuhn," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 73:1 (2010): 132–34.

⁴For a recent interpretation and evaluation of some of Hartwell's work, see Luo Yinan, "A Study of the Changes in the 'Tang-Song Transition Model,'" *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 35 (2005): 99–127.

⁵Lo Jung-pang and Bruce A. Elleman, eds., *China as a Sea Power, 1127–1368* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2011).

⁶For a fuller review, see Hilde De Weerdt, "Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics, Patricia Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, eds.," *Chinese Historical Review* 14:2 (2007): 310–13.

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Note:

Since this essay was first published and as the English edition is going to press another essay on the state of the field of Song studies has appeared (de Pee, 2012). This essay offers a critical assessment of social historical research in the post-war era and argues that work by a select group of younger scholars has led to the rehabilitation of the philological scholarship of the nineteenth century, culminating in the work of the author himself. de Pee’s essay situates many of the works listed here within a longer-term intellectual genealogy which leads back to republican-era nationalist scholarship. The critical approach is, however, not applied to nineteenth-century philology itself. It is also doubtful that the authors drawn into the new philological genealogy would see their own work as a continuation of the work of nineteenth-century philologists. de Pee’s programmatic approach ultimately results in a narrow vision of the field, one in which junior researchers pursuing wide-ranging interests and adopting varying methodologies are removed from the main stage of Song scholarship and represented as extras pursuing “traditional varieties of political, military, and diplomatic history.”

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Yuan Studies in North America: Historical Overview, Contributions, and Current Trends

Bettine Birge

The study of the Yuan dynasty has tended to fall between two other large areas of research: Mongol and Inner Asian studies, especially of the Mongol World Empire, and sinology or Chinese studies, especially Middle Period history. Scholars who have contributed to our understanding of the Yuan have tended to be either Mongolists who trained their eye on China, or sinologists, usually Song or Ming historians, who have extended their research into the Yuan period. Important scholarship has thus come from two perspectives: one that sees Yuan China as part of the Mongol World Empire, often using Mongolian or Persian among other sources, and another that looks at the Yuan as a Chinese dynasty, albeit one ruled by a non-Chinese people, using mainly Chinese sources. Yuan history presents the challenge that it is a combination of both these perspectives.

In this short overview, I will focus on the more influential works and trends in the field to provide a history and survey of Yuan studies. Such an essay inevitably includes some reference to European and Australian scholars, who have historically led the field of Mongol studies and have influenced American scholarship on the Yuan.

The Origins of Yuan Studies in North America: The Mongolist Legacy

Mongol studies has traditionally been centered in Europe (including Russia), and more recently Australia. Pioneering work was done in the early and mid-twentieth century by a number of prodigious scholars in Europe whose names are legendary among Mongol and Yuan scholars around the world. These include the late Paul Pelliot (1878–1945), Nicholas Poppe (1897–1991), the Rev. Antoine Mostaert (1881–1971), Louis Ligeti (1902–87), Erich Haenisch (1880–1966), Ferdinand D. Lessing (1882–1961), Louis Hambis (1906–78), and Paul Ratchnevsky (1899–1991) among others. These scholars and others laid the groundwork for Sino-Mongolian studies in North America.¹

Sino-Mongolian studies crossed the Atlantic by several routes. In 1949 the Russian linguist Nicholas Poppe (born in China in 1897) emigrated to the United States and joined the Inner Asia Project at the University of Washington, Seattle.² One of Poppe's students was John R. Krueger, who became a professor of Mongolian and Inner Asian languages at Indiana University, Bloomington, and helped establish it as the major center in North America for Mongol and Inner Asian studies. The great Hungarian linguist György Kara, formerly a student of Louis Ligeti in Budapest, joined Krueger at Indiana and carried on after the latter's retirement. Kara brings to his research and teaching knowledge of numerous East Asian and Altaic languages, including Mongolian, Manchu, Tibetan, old Turkic, and Khitan, and can be considered the greatest authority on Mongolian language, linguistics,

and literature alive today. His work on the history of Mongolian writing (translated from the Russian by John Krueger) clarifies how the Mongols borrowed from the civilizations around them to make the Yuan dynasty and the World Empire possible (Kara 2005).

Another route of transmission was in the person of Ferdinand D. Lessing, a student of F. W. Müller in Berlin, who came to the University of California, Berkeley, in 1935 to head the Department of Oriental Languages. There he inaugurated courses in Mongolian and Tibetan, the first in the nation, and established the university as a center of Asian studies. His Mongolian-English dictionary is the standard reference work for Yuan era Mongolian (1973, plus later reprints). Berkeley has maintained its program more recently with Mongol and Manchu specialists such as James Bosson, but Mongol studies at Berkeley declined over time, and today the school no longer offers Mongolian instruction and is no longer a center for Mongol or Yuan studies.

Programs in Mongol studies nowadays are rare in North America. The University of California, at Berkeley and Los Angeles, and the University of Washington, Seattle, have all dropped their programs. An exception is the program at Western Washington University (WWU) in Bellingham, Washington, where Henry G. Schwarz founded a Mongolian studies program in 1975. Western Washington offers modern Mongolian language, with tutoring available in the classical language, and an array of courses about Mongolia past and present. The university also administers an intensive summer language program in Inner Mongolia. Moreover, it houses the largest library collection of books on Mongolia in North America, approximately eleven thousand titles in all languages (about 60 percent in Mongolian), and an endowment fund provides travel grants for scholars who wish to use the collection. The US branch of the American Center for Mongolian Studies (ACMS) was formerly located at WWU but has now moved to the University of Wisconsin. A well-developed program in Inner Asian studies also exists at the University of Toronto. Today Indiana University in Bloomington has the most comprehensive Mongolia program in the United States and offers a full range of Mongolian language instruction, both classical and modern, and a full curriculum in Eurasian studies. With its distinguished faculty and the Sinor Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies (formerly known as RIFIAS, now SRIFIAS), founded by the great Inner Asian specialist Denis Sinor, from Hungary, together with the headquarters of the Mongolia Society and the US government-funded Inner Asian and Uralic National Resource Center, it is one of the preeminent centers for Mongol and Inner Asian studies around the world.

Another direct line of transmission of Sino-Mongolian studies from Europe to the United States came from Francis Woodman Cleaves (1911–95). Cleaves was a student of the great Paul Pelliot in Paris and later went to Beijing, where he studied with the Belgian scholar Rev. Antoine Mostaert. Cleaves took up a position at Harvard University and became editor of the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, which published a series of monographic studies by him widely cited for the wealth of linguistic and historical information they contain. Cleaves also produced the first complete translation into English of the *Secret History of the Mongols* (1982).

Cleaves was joined at Harvard by the brilliant multilinguist Joseph Fletcher (1934–84), and together they trained a new generation of Sino-Mongolian researchers. Sadly, Joseph Fletcher died prematurely in 1984, leaving Francis Cleaves to mentor students from his retirement to maintain the Mongol program at Harvard until his death in 1995. His student Elizabeth Endicott (formerly Endicott-West) taught at Harvard for several years, but when she left no one dedicated to Mongolian and Yuan studies

replaced her. Today Harvard trains students of Mongol-Yuan studies under the direction of Peter K. Bol, a Middle Period intellectual and social history specialist, together with Mark Elliott, a Manchu expert who also does Mongolian, and Leonard Van der Kuijp, an expert on Tibet during the Yuan dynasty.

Another important founder of Yuan studies in the United States is Frederick W. Mote (1922–2005). He was another student of Nicholas Poppe at the University of Washington, Seattle, although his focus was sinology, not Mongolian. Mote was also trained in Nanjing, China, and became a professor of Chinese history at Princeton University, specializing in the Yuan and Ming periods. He played an important role in establishing the outstanding East Asia program at Princeton. His scholarship on the Yuan spanned the fields of political, cultural, intellectual, and literary history, including early work on the poet Gao Qi (1962). Much of his research and teaching is summed up in his comprehensive history, *Imperial China, 900–1800* (1999), published at the end of his life.

These two scholars, Francis Cleaves and Frederick Mote, can be considered the founders of Yuan studies in the United States, and much of the major scholarship on the Yuan produced in North America has come from their students. They also represent the two approaches to the Yuan: Cleaves emphasizing the use of Mongolian documents and Mote basing his research primarily on Chinese documents.

Three other scholars, all still active, deserve special attention for their great contributions to Yuan studies in North America. Their prodigious linguistic skills have allowed them to combine both Mongol and sinological sources in their research and thus cross the divide between Mongolists and sinologists, making unparalleled contributions to the field. Herbert Franke (b. 1914) of Munich Germany, now in his nineties,³ was the coeditor with sinologist Dennis Twitchett of volume 6 of *The Cambridge History of China*, the monumental work in English on the history of the Liao, Jin, and Yuan (1994). His copious works, in English and German, laid the groundwork for Yuan studies in the United States and address issues of continuing importance such as legitimation of Yuan rule (1978), assimilation of the Mongol rulers (or lack thereof), foreign relations, foreigners and their influence in China, women and gender, religion, and warfare. Some of his most influential studies in English can be found in a convenient 1994 Variorum reprint (Franke, 1994). He is also known for his contributions to Song studies. Franke's importance in the field is further attested by the fact that two festschriften have been written for him, one published in 1979 (see Franke et al., 1979) and the other in 2004 (Johnson and Popova, 2004) on the occasion of his ninetieth birthday. The latter, edited by the late Wallace Johnson, focuses on Inner Asian law and includes an important essay on Mongol and Yuan law by Françoise Aubin (Aubin 2004).

Igor de Rachewiltz was born in Italy (1929) but studied in Australia and stayed on there as a research professor at the Australian National University. He soon distinguished himself for numerous important studies of Chinese and Mongolian history in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries based on his extraordinary knowledge of pre-Classical Mongolian, Chinese, and numerous other languages of Europe and East Asia. His PhD dissertation was on Chinggis Khan's adviser Yelü Chucai, and much of his early work focused on East-West relations during the Yuan and Mongol World Empire (1971, 1972). He is best known for his masterwork, the definitive translation into English of the *Secret History of the Mongols* (2004), which includes copious annotations and historical and philological

analysis. In addition to numerous articles, he has produced several important indexes and reference works that are indispensable to the study of Yuan history (discussed below).

Joining these rarified ranks of scholars able to use both Altaic and Sinitic languages in their research is Morris Rossabi (b. 1941), the foremost scholar of Yuan studies in the United States today. Rossabi was born in Egypt and completed his PhD in East and Central Asian history at Columbia University in 1970. He also studied with Joseph Fletcher at Harvard. Able to speak or read a dozen languages, including among others Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Persian, and Mongolian, Rossabi in his work has made major breakthroughs in Yuan and Middle Period Chinese history. His early book, *China and Inner Asia* (1975), and his edited volume, *China among Equals* (1983), challenged conventional understandings of China's foreign relations. The latter work showed that the Song state was knowledgeable about its neighbors and understood itself to be part of a multistate system based on diplomatic parity. Rossabi's biography of Khubilai, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (1988), was similarly pathbreaking and continues to provide the most complete treatment of the cultural and political dimensions of the thirteenth century. And Rossabi was one of the first to research women under the Mongols (1979, 1989, 1992). In later years he turned his attention to the history of modern Mongolia (2005) and to China and its minorities (2004), but recently he has returned to premodern history in *Genghis Khan and the Mongol Empire* (2009), *The Mongols and Global History: A Norton Documents Reader* (2011), and *The Mongols: A Very Short Introduction* (2012). The work of all three of these scholars is discussed below.

Yuan Scholarship in the Late Twentieth Century: Overview by Subject

Compared to other dynasties in China, the Yuan remains relatively understudied. Not until the 1980s did American scholars start to produce significant research on the Yuan. In 1978 the *Sung Studies Newsletter* became the *Bulletin of Sung-Yuan Studies*, thus signifying the emergence of Yuan studies as a subfield within North American scholarship on Chinese history. In 1990 the *Bulletin* changed its name to *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, published by the Society for Song, Yuan, and Conquest Dynasty Studies. The *Journal* is devoted to publishing scholarship in all disciplines relating to the Song, Liao, Jin, Xia, and Yuan dynasties. It is noteworthy that Yuan history remains tied to Song and conquest dynasty studies in the United States and cannot support its own journal; nevertheless, researchers have produced significant scholarship, which has established the singular importance of the Yuan dynasty in Chinese history and its lasting influence on Chinese government, thought, law, and society. The following pages highlight major contributions to the field and significant breakthroughs, organized roughly by topic. Readers are urged to search for additional works by the authors mentioned. The vast majority of the research is based primarily on Chinese sources and represents what I call the sinological perspective.

Three edited volumes published in 1981, 1982, and 2003 represent the arc of Yuan studies from its early days, when intellectual history and historiography were central topics, to more recent times when scholars have branched out to a wide variety of topics in social and economic history. The first edited volume to appear on the Yuan was *China under Mongol Rule*, edited by John Langlois, a student of Frederick Mote (Langlois, 1981). The essays therein address the effect of the reunification of China

on cultural life and tend to emphasize the continuity of Chinese traditions. Several essays address intellectual history, including historiography, although art and literature are also included. Important contributions by Herbert Franke (1981) and Morris Rossabi (1981) deal with foreigners in China and their influence. The importance of intellectual history in early Yuan studies is further demonstrated by the next edited volume devoted to Yuan studies to be published in the United States, *Yuan Thought*, edited by Hok-lam Chan (another student of Frederick Mote) and Wm. Theodore de Bary (1982). This collection primarily addresses Neo-Confucian thought under the Yuan, but it also includes Buddhism and political thought.

The third edited volume appeared in 2003, titled *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History* and edited by Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn, both originally Song historians. This volume argues for the lasting significance of the Yuan in Chinese history. The contents of this work reveal a shift toward social and economic history that reflects developments in Middle Period history in general (Song-Ming studies) and a branching out of topics to include population, technology, urban growth, women, medicine, printing, and Confucianism in local society. An excellent essay by Richard von Glahn, “Imagining Pre-modern China,” discusses different perspectives on the place of the Yuan in Chinese history and establishes the Song-Yuan-Ming period as an important transition time that was highly influential in Chinese history. The essay by John Dardess (1983), “Did the Mongols Matter? Territory, Power, and the Intelligentsia in China from the Northern Song to the Early Ming,” argues that the Mongols left a profound mark on China, which laid the groundwork for the later establishment of a multiethnic empire by the Qing and in turn made possible the nation of the People’s Republic of China.

General History and Reference Works

The field of Yuan studies was greatly enhanced in the United States by the publication in 1994 of volume 6 of *The Cambridge History of China, Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368*, edited by Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett. This volume contains excellent essays on the political and social history of the Yuan by Frederick Mote, Morris Rossabi, Hsiao Ch’i-Ch’ing, John Dardess, and Elizabeth Endicott.⁴ Thomas Allsen’s essay on the rise of the Mongolian empire is noteworthy for its discussion of Mongol tribal and ethnic identity as being primarily a matter of fluid associations that were political, not biological. (This topic has been taken up in recent years by David Sneath of Cambridge University [see Sneath, 2007] and the Japanese scholar Sugiyama Masaaki and is being further pursued by the American scholar Christopher Atwood.) The bibliographic essay at the back by Frederick Mote, covering both primary and secondary sources, is still indispensable for scholars of Yuan studies around the world. Five years later, in 1999, Mote, one of the principle founders of Yuan studies in the United States, published a synthesis of his years of research and teaching, *Imperial China, 900–1800*, which provides a thorough overview of political, social, and intellectual history and, moreover, allows comparisons between all the major conquest dynasties of the Liao, Jin, Yuan, and Qing.

The most important reference works for the study of Yuan history have come from scholars who were trained as Mongolists. The late David Farquhar (1927–85) of UCLA produced an indispensable, comprehensive survey of Yuan government institutions, *The Government of China under Mongolian Rule: A Reference Guide* (1990). This masterwork draws together information on all government bureaus from the major primary sources of the Yuan, the *Yuanshi* 元史, *Jingshidadian* 經世大典, *Tongzhi tiaoge* 通制

條格, *Yuan dianzhang* 元典章, and *Yuan wenlei* 元文類, as well as later works, plus it includes references to a wealth of secondary scholarship. Chinese and Mongolian indexes allow easy cross-checking, and Farquhar's translations of government offices are becoming standard in English-language work. The best reference work for general Yuan and Mongolian history is *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire* (2004), by Christopher Atwood of Indiana University, a former student of György Kara and John Krueger. Valuable information can also be found in Paul D. Buell, *Historical Dictionary of the Mongol World Empire* (2003). Another indispensable reference work for Yuan history is Igor de Rachewiltz et al., eds., *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yuan Period (1200–1300)* (1993). This includes biographies of military leaders, advisers and administrators, and religious leaders, each with a comprehensive bibliography of primary and secondary works. Multiple indexes of names, places, topics, and offices and titles, plus a comprehensive bibliography of works in all languages, further add to the value of the work. Two other major reference compilations in English by Igor de Rachewiltz with May Wang fill out the basic tools for Yuan period research, namely, *Index to Biographical Material in Chin and Yuan Literary Works* (1979) and *Repertory of Proper Names in Yuan Literary Sources* (1988, 1998).

Political and Institutional History

Research on Yuan political structure and government institutions is an area where North American scholarship (broadly defined) has made significant contributions and breakthroughs. The program at Harvard University led by Frances Cleaves and Joseph Fletcher and that at Princeton University spearheaded by Frederick Mote trained a number of outstanding scholars from around the world who began to produce important monographs and articles in English that have strongly influenced the field. A student of Cleaves and Fletcher at Harvard, Chin-fu Hung, in his PhD dissertation of 1982 (and many subsequent works in Chinese) described the operation of the Censorate in Yuan China, including its local function of surveillance of officials, an activity of great importance to the Yuan rulers. Another Cleaves student, Ch'i-ch'ing Hsiao, produced a systematic study of the Yuan military system (1978), with special attention to its Inner Asian roots and its adaptation to Chinese institutions.

Elizabeth Endicott, who received her PhD from Princeton, studied with both Mote and Cleaves. Her book *Mongolian Rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty* (Endicott-West, 1989) describes the actual workings of Yuan administration at the local level and contains a wealth of information on Yuan government, including the institution of the *dalū huāchì* 达鲁花赤 (Mong. *darughachi*). She concludes that, although the Yuan government was significantly decentralized and encumbered at the local level by overlapping jurisdictions, repetitive functions, and mandated deliberation, in the end officials at all levels ultimately answered to the central government in Dadu, except those in appanages of imperial princes (see also Endicott-West, 1986). Her description of general centralization, albeit with fragmented civil authority, contrasts with the view of David Farquhar (1981) that the Yuan state was highly decentralized and provincial secretariats (*xingsheng* 行省) acted independent of the central government.

Some of the most interesting work on Yuan government by North Americans has looked at how religious considerations affected political rule. Elizabeth Endicott has looked at local administrators' relationships with shamans and *yin-yang* practitioners (1999), and Morris Rossabi has reevaluated

Khubilai's famous religious tolerance, seeing it as an aspect of political expediency (2008). Influences of other Inner Asian states on Yuan government are explored by Endicott (Endicott-West, 1991) and Ruth Dunnell (1992).

From the Mongolist perspective, important studies have examined how nomadic leadership was translated into dynastic rule in China (Franke, 1978; Allsen, 1987, 2001). North American scholars of the Qing, such as Mark Elliott and Pamela Crossley, have demonstrated how steppe forms of governance based on personal, charismatic leadership among non-Chinese elites continued to play an important role in the rulership of conquest dynasties of China, thus distinguishing them from native Chinese dynasties. Thomas Allsen discusses the royal hunt as an aspect of rulership in Eurasia (2006), although the field awaits a more specific study of the character of Mongol-Yuan imperial rule. David Sneath, of Cambridge, England, has made a major breakthrough in his analysis of nomadic state formation. In his book *The Headless State* (2007), he rejects earlier descriptions of kinship-based tribal society among steppe nomads with vertical hierarchies and argues instead for fluid political alliances led by local aristocrats who formed horizontal alliances among themselves, which may or may not have included an overarching ruler as head of state.

Intellectual History, Historiography, and Printing

The history of thought has been a major focus of scholarship on the Yuan in the United States, and it is an area where American scholarship continues to make important breakthroughs. The key issue for American scholars has been the spread of Neo-Confucianism at the local level and its adoption as state orthodoxy by the Yuan government. In a pathbreaking work, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (1981), Wm. Theodore de Bary established how Xu Heng promoted Zhu Xi's interpretation of Confucianism at the Yuan court and adapted it for the Mongol rulers, with profound consequences for Chinese history. This resulted in the reintroduction of the civil service examinations in 1313 based on Zhu Xi's Four Books (discussed further by Elman, 2000) and the rise of a new, narrow orthodoxy of Confucian thought, which spread to Japan and Korea. In this book and others, de Bary establishes the religious nature of Neo-Confucian practice and its universal message, which could be applied across territorial and ethnic boundaries and used by both rulers and ruled. The volume discussed above, edited by Hok-lam Chan and de Bary, *Yüan Thought: Chinese Thought and Religion under the Mongols* (1982), further contributed to our understanding of the Yuan era as a watershed moment in the history of thought and religion. The volume includes an essay by Wing-tsit Chan on how Zhu Xi's thought was transmitted to North China during the early Yuan, among other important essays. In other important works, John Dardess describes how Confucian debates came to dominate the late Yuan court and how the adoption of Zhu Xi thought contributed to the emergence of autocracy within the Ming court (1973, 1983).

The study of local history, so pronounced in the field of Song scholarship, has been tied to the study of Confucianism in the Yuan field. The Confucian elites of Wuzhou 婺州 (modern Jinhua 金华, Zhejiang Province), their influence on Yuan and Ming political thought, and their embrace of Zhu Xi thought have been studied by Langlois (1974, 1981) and Bol (2001, 2003). The Neo-Confucian influence on family organization and land reform in Zhejiang are the subject of articles by John Dardess (1974, 1982), the latter included in the *Yuan Thought* volume discussed above.

Peter Bol 包弼德 has advanced the study of Confucianism a major step forward in his *Neo-Confucianism in History* (2008), which examines how the new doctrine of Neo-Confucianism (Chinese *daoxue* 道學 or *lixue* 理學) provided local elites with a source of moral authority and community leadership independent of the imperial state. Bol shows that Neo-Confucianism engendered mechanisms of elite community leadership that were embraced by the state, which came to rely on them for its survival. He integrates an analysis of Neo-Confucian theory with other social and political developments over time and shows how Neo-Confucianism became a major force in Chinese history for five centuries beginning in the Yuan.

Another key issue for North American scholars has been that of Confucian eremitism and officials who refused to serve the Mongols (Mote, 1960; Tu Wei-ming, 1982). Jennifer Jay's thorough study of resistance and loyalty from 1273 to 1300 (1991) argues that Song loyalty took a wide variety of forms and even exemplary Song loyalists sought various types of accommodation with the Mongol regime. She posits that loyalty must be understood as a spectrum of relative rather than absolute values.

In her important study of schools and academies in the Song and Yuan, Linda Walton addresses the institutional aspects of the spread of Neo-Confucianism (1989). And Thomas H. C. Lee touches on the Yuan in his thorough survey of traditional Chinese education (2000). Lee stresses the importance of the Yuan in establishing permanent, land-endowed local schools for the general populace and their association with Confucian temples and rituals, developments that endured for the rest of the imperial period. These excellent works notwithstanding, the important topic of the spread of state-sponsored schools, their connection to Confucianism and ritual practice, and other developments in education during the Yuan deserve greater attention from Western scholars.

Historiography was an early subject of study by Yuan specialists, with an important contribution by Herbert Franke, "Chinese Historiography under Mongol Rule: The role of History in Acculturation" (1974, reprinted in *China under Mongol Rule*, 1994), and by Hok-lam Chan, "Chinese Official Historiography at the Yuan Court: The Composition of the Liao, Chin, and Sung Histories" (in Langlois, 1981, reprinted in Hok-lam Chan, *China and the Mongols*, 1999). Jennifer Jay's work on loyalty, discussed above (1991), also addresses historiography, showing how the record of Song loyalists shifted and was distorted in different contexts and over time.

The spread of printing and print culture in China and its important implications for Chinese history have become the subject of much research on the later imperial period (see other essays in this volume). Much less attention has been paid to the Yuan period, although the printing industry of Jianning, Fujian, is the subject of Lucille Chia's work *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries)*, 2002, which includes much Yuan material. Other work has addressed the cultural history of books over several centuries (McDermott, 2006) and the visual and technical aspects of printed books in general (Mote et al., 1989). A recent volume based on a workshop at Harvard in 2007 addresses the early history of printing, collecting, and the uses of print for the dissemination of different kinds of knowledge (Chia and De Weerd, 2011).

Legal History

Legal history during the Yuan has also attracted relatively more attention than other subjects. Key issues have been the influence of Mongol rule on Chinese law and the affects of the Yuan not

promulgating a legal code. Paul Heng-chao Ch'en (now of Tokyo University) explores the penal system and various aspects of the administration of justice during the Yuan in his 1979 study and translation into English of the reconstructed fragments of the 1291 legal code the *Zhiyuan xingge* 至元新格, based on his PhD dissertation, under the direction of Frances Cleaves at Harvard. Previously the *Xingfa zhi* 刑法志 section of the *Yuanshi* 元史 was translated into French by Paul Ratchnevsky and published with a detailed study and an index by Françoise Aubin (Ratchnevsky and Aubin 1972–85). John Langlois produced several important studies of Yuan and Ming law during the 1980s and contributed the Ming law chapter to *The Cambridge History of China*. His 1981 article “Living Law in Sung and Yuan Jurisprudence” discusses the *Xingtongfu* 刑統賦 and its Yuan commentaries and how Yuan legal thinkers addressed the flexible application of law codes to complex cases (available in Chinese translation).⁵ In a 1982 essay published in *Yuan Thought*, titled “Law, Statecraft, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* in Yüan Political Thought,” Langlois discusses how Yuan officials reacted to the failure of the Yuan court to enact a statutory code (*lü* 律) and how this affected political thought and institutions. More recently, Bettine Birge has followed this up with a study of how the absence of a legal code profoundly affected adjudication in the Yuan (2010).

The issue of Mongol influences on Chinese law has been addressed in general by Paul Ratchnevsky (1993) and Bettine Birge (2008, in English and Chinese). Birge researched the influence of Yuan rule on marriage and property law in her *Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction in Sung and Yüan China (960–1368)* (2002), forthcoming in Chinese (China Social Sciences Press).⁶ Using legal cases from the Song and Yuan, especially the *Yuan dianzhang* 元典章, she argues that the confusion generated by Mongol laws such as the legalization of levirate marriage in 1271 resulted ironically in the opportunity for Learning of the Way Confucians (*daoxue jia*, Neo-Confucians) to promote their agenda at court, resulting in a series of laws in the 1310s that restricted women's property rights and their freedom to remarry. In this and other works (1995 [Chinese 2001, 2012], 2003), Birge demonstrates that Mongol rule in China precipitated a lasting transformation of marriage and property law that reduced women's legal and economic autonomy and laid the groundwork for the later emergence of the cult of widow chastity. This conclusion reinforces the research on Confucianism discussed above and shows how the adoption of Zhu Xi thought by the Yuan government had long-term consequences in the realms of gender and law.

Social and Economic History

Compared to the Song and later dynasties, the social history of the Yuan is not well studied by North American scholars. Coverage of Yuan social and economic history is mostly included in books spanning several centuries or dynasties, although a few exceptions are presented below. The work follows the pattern of Song scholars extending their earlier work into the Yuan dynasty.

Kinship organization and the growth of lineages is one key area of research. Important studies are found in the volume *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940*, edited by Patricia Ebrey and James Watson (1986). In her essay, Ebrey surveys the repertoire of agnatic kinship practices and institutions that evolved during the Song and Yuan. The Song social historian Robert Hymes extends his work on marriage connections and the localist strategy of Fuzhou, Jiangxi, into the Yuan dynasty in his essay, titled “Marriage, Descent Groups, and the Localist Strategy in Sung and Yüan Fu-chou.”

An essay by Jerry Dennerline covers marriage, adoption, and charity in Wuxi lineages from Song to Qing.

In the area of economic history, Herbert Franz Schurmann, a student of Francis Cleaves at Harvard, lays out the Yuan tax system in his seminal work *Economic Structure of the Yuan Dynasty* (1956), based on the Yuan dynastic history (chapters 93 and 94 of which he translates). A monographic article of his, “Mongolian Tributary Practices of the Thirteenth Century” (1956), and John Smith’s “Mongol and Nomadic Taxation” (1970) explore early forms of Mongol and Yuan levies and show how the Mongols, at least initially, envisioned wealth and taxation in terms of people rather than land. More recently, Valerie Hansen, in *Negotiating Daily Life in Traditional China: How Ordinary People Used Contracts, 600–1400* (1995), shows how the use of contracts became widespread in the Yuan and that the Yuan government was more effective than the Song had been in collecting taxes on contracts and commercial transactions. Richard von Glahn touches on the Yuan in his excellent survey of money and monetary policy in China from 1000 to 1700 (1996). A nice essay by Hok-lam Chan, included as an appendix in David Farquhar’s 1990 reference work, discussed above, makes good sense of the Yuan currency system (Chan, Hok-lam, 1990). Other recent essays are included in the *Song-Yuan-Ming Transition* volume (2003) edited by Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn, discussed above.

Nancy Steinhardt (University of Pennsylvania) has done important work on city planning and Yuan architecture that is related to social history (1983, 1990, 1990). More recently she has addressed the interesting issue of the blurring of ethnic identity, as seen in tomb art (2007).

Gender

Gender deserves to be discussed separately because the subject has generated numerous important studies. These works have addressed the political power of Mongol women, marriage, and ideas about gender that arose during the Yuan dynasty.

The great Mongolist Herbert Franke in 1980 published an essay titled “Women under the Dynasties of Conquest.” Likewise, Morris Rossabi contributed an essay to the 1979 festschrift for Herbert Franke that looked at the influence of imperial women on Mongol rulers, “Khubilai Khan and the Women in His Family.” In later work Rossabi addressed the historiography of the study of women under the Yuan (1992) and the life of a woman artist in the Yuan (1989).

Among sinologists, Jennifer Holmgren (now resident in Australia) produced a long article on the operation of the levirate within the context of other marriage practices of the Mongols and Chinese, “Observations on Marriage and Inheritance Practices in Early Mongol and Yuan Society, with Particular Reference to the Levirate” (1986). She demonstrates under what conditions widow chastity was viable within Chinese society and how non-Han ideas may have influenced Chinese ideas about marriage. The book-length study by Bettine Birge (2002) discussed above draws on this work and goes into further detail about how Mongol rule brought about changes in Chinese property and marriage law. Imperial marriages of the Yuan and their importance for maintaining the empire have been made the subject of a recent book-length study by George Qingzhi Zhao, *Marriage as Political Strategy and Cultural Expression: Mongolian Royal Marriages from World Empire to Yuan Dynasty* (2008), based on his PhD dissertation at the University of Toronto. Previously, Holmgren touched on this subject as well (1991).

Paul Smith made a singular contribution to Yuan gender studies in a monographic study of Kong Qi and the *Zhizheng zhibiji* 至正直记 (1998). Smith shows that the takeover of China by non-Han rulers generated great anxiety about gender norms being overturned, as seen in Kong Qi's bitter criticism of women having too much power within uxori-local marriages (including those of his own family). A study by Beverly Bossler (2004) explores how the Mongol conquest produced a new discourse on faithful wives, in which narratives of heroic female acts of loyalty became common. She argues that such writing about loyalty took the place of heroic action by male literati, as elite males found accommodation with the Mongol rulers.

Medicine

The area of medicine in the Yuan has gained a surprising amount of attention. Robert Hymes in his study "Not Quite Gentlemen? Doctors in Sung and Yuan" explores the social origins and status of doctors in Yuan China. He concludes that under the Yuan, unlike the Song, medicine became a respectable profession for elite, educated men (*shidafu* 士大夫, 1987). Reiko Shinno in her PhD dissertation (Stanford, 2002) notes how the Yuan government sponsored medical learning, much as it did Confucian schools, as part of a strategy of rulership (see also Shinno, 2007). Angela Ki-che Leung (Academia Sinica, Taiwan) further contributed an essay to Smith and von Glahn's *Song-Yuan-Ming Transition* volume about medical learning and its transmission in the Yuan (2003). Paul Buell and Eugene Anderson look at dietary medicine of the Yuan based on the *Yinshan zhenyao* 飲膳正要 and discuss this text's significance for Yuan imperial rule over a multiethnic empire (2000). Forthcoming work by Angela Schottenhammer discusses Persian influences on Yuan medicine (Schottenhammer 2013).

Foreign Relations, Foreign Residents, and Trade

Mongol-Yuan contacts with Europe were an early topic of study by westerners, and there is a large literature on the subject, mostly by Europeans. Christopher Dawson in 1955 published the narratives and letters of the Christian missionaries who visited the Mongol emperors, John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck, and others. Later work on these missions includes that of Komroff (1989) and Jackson and Morgan (1990). Herbert Franke early on also addressed Sino-Western contacts in the Mongol empire (1966), as did Luther C. Goodrich (1957). Igor de Rachewiltz discussed in his early work relations with the Pope in Rome and images of East Asia in Europe (1971, 1972).

Tibetans in China and their influence have been the subject of work by Herbert Franke (1981) and Luciano Petech (1983). Igor de Rachewiltz explored Turks in China and Turco-Mongol relations (1983). Morris Rossabi early on addressed the general issue of Muslims in China (1981), and John Chaffee has done important new work on maritime Muslim communities in China (2006) and Muslim merchants in Quanzhou and their identity (2009). The issue of the *semu ren* 色目人 in China is the subject of a pathbreaking book by Michael Brose, *Subjects and Masters: Uyghurs in the Mongol Empire* (2007). Also of note are Brose's work on the Uighur influence on writing and literacy in the Yuan (2005) and an early essay on Uighurs by Thomas Allsen (1983). A PhD dissertation at Harvard by Jackie Armijo explores the remarkable career of the Muslim governor of Yunnan, Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-Din 賽典赤 and the historiography of the surviving records about him (1997). Many foreigners,

including religious leaders, are included in the biographies collected in *In the Service of the Khan*, edited by Igor de Rachewiltz and others (1993), mentioned above.

Trade and global networks both by land and by sea have been a key issue in recent scholarship. Thomas Allsen's 2001 *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* shows extensive commodity, technology, and personnel exchange across Eurasia between China and Iran, which contributed to Yuan rule and social development. More recently, scholars have turned their attention to maritime trade and cultural exchanges across the Indian Ocean. Two books edited by Angela Schottenhammer, one titled *The East Asian Mediterranean: Maritime Crossroads of Culture, Commerce, and Human Migration*, have shown the importance of southern maritime exchanges (2005, 2008). Tansen Sen's 2004 *Buddhism, Diplomacy, and Trade: The Realignment of Sino-Indian Relations, 600–1400* and a 2006 article also contribute to this new perspective. John Chaffee has placed Yuan China into its global context with his article "At the Intersection of Empire and World Trade: The Chinese Port City of Quanzhou (Zaitun), Eleventh-Fifteenth Centuries" (2008). A recent PhD dissertation by Hyunhee Park from Yale University (2008) explores exchanges of geographic knowledge in China and the Islamic world. Elizabeth Endicott addressed the question of trade and merchant associations in her 1989 article on the *ortogh* (Endicott-West, 1989). Readers should also consult the chapters in Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran, eds., *Mongols, Turks, and Others: Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World* (2005) for essays on contacts and influences across Eurasia. See also the section on twenty-first-century trends below.

There exists an extensive literature on Marco Polo, starting with Paul Pelliot's extensive *Notes on Marco Polo* (1959–63) and including Frances Cleaves's important *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* article of 1976 presenting the most compelling data for Marco Polo's visit to China (based in large part on the seminal work of the Chinese scholar Yang Zhijiu 杨志玖). A controversy was raised in 1995 when Frances Wood of the British Library in London published *Did Marco Polo Go to China?*, suggesting that Marco Polo never made it to China at all. This suggestion generated an outpouring of articles and books, mostly by Europeans, refuting such a conclusion. Of particular note are those by Igor de Rachewiltz (1997), Peter Jackson (1998), and Stephen Haw (2006). The large literature on Marco Polo has been dominated by Europeans and is beyond the scope of this short essay.

New Directions in the Twenty-first Century

The twenty-first century has seen a revival of Yuan studies in North America. New scholarship from the sinology side has forged an appreciation of the crucial role that the Yuan dynasty has played in Chinese history. Moreover, the new scholarship in the twenty-first century has moved in the direction of reintegrating Yuan history with the history of the Mongol World Empire.

A promising current trend in new scholarship is to place Yuan China back in its global context. Recent scholarship (some mentioned above) and work in progress address issues such as land trade, maritime networks, and cultural diffusion (Allsen, 2001; Chaffee, 2008, 2009; Schottenhammer, 2005, 2008; Kauz, 2006–7); the influence of *semu ren* and other foreigners in China (Brose, 2005, 2007; Chaffee, 2006; Sen, 2006); diplomacy and cross-cultural exchanges (Rossabi, 2008; Sen, 2003, 2006); and Persian and Eurasian influences on Yuan medicine, technology, and art. Nathan Sivin has produced a master study of the Chinese astronomical reform of 1280 that explores the project's cultural, political,

bureaucratic, and personal significance and includes a translation of the major treatise on the subject (Sivin et al., 2009). Work in progress on historiography by Christopher Atwood examines how Chinese historians after the Yuan distorted the historical record to deemphasize the extent to which the Yuan rulers considered China to be just one part of a larger Mongol empire.⁷

Two recent conferences have promoted this trend of seeing Yuan China in the wider context of the Mongol empire and worldwide exchanges. Both were held in North America but brought together scholars from Europe, the United States, and Asia, thus reproducing in the scholar-participants the same global vision as the subject matter. The first, held at Indiana University in September 2008, was in honor of the great Inner Asia scholar Denis Sinor on the subject of state and family in the Mongol empire and its successor states across Eurasia. It was titled “Family and the State in Chinggisid and Post-Chinggisid Central Eurasia” and organized by Indiana professors Christopher Atwood and Edward Lazzarini. The second conference, held in November 2009 at Binghamton University, New York, and organized by John Chaffee and Angela Schottenhammer, was “Eurasian Influences on Yuan China: Cross-Cultural Transmissions in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries” and, like the first, included American, Asian, and European colleagues. It covered the subjects of trade, foreigners, religion, cartography, law, medicine, and art and visual culture, especially Persian impacts on these. A conference volume edited by Morris Rossabi, titled *Eurasian Influences on the Yuan*, will be published by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, in 2013.

These conferences and recent scholarship point the way to greater cooperation among scholars worldwide and a promising new direction of integrating sinology with world history in the study of the Yuan period.

Notes

Bettine Birge is a professor of Chinese History and Civilization at the University of Southern California specializing in the Yuan dynasty. Her research interests include Chinese and Inner Asian law, gender relations, comparative systems of marriage, social and ethnic identity, and Confucianism in local practice. She holds a PhD from Columbia University and is the author of *Women, Property, and Confucian Reaction in Sung and Yuan China* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), which is forthcoming in Chinese from Chinese Social Sciences press. Currently she is completing a study and translation of marriage cases in the Sino-Mongolian legal compilation *Yuan dianzhang* 元典章 (Statutes and Precedents of the Yuan Dynasty) titled *Marriage and the Law in the Age of Khubilai Khan*. She is the English-language editor of the trilingual journal *Studies in Chinese History* 中國史學, published in Tokyo.

Author's note: This essay was written in August 2009 for a Chinese audience. Although I have not tried to update it systematically, I have made some minor corrections and revisions for this English-language edition.

¹ Other scholars, especially Russians, have also made substantial contributions to Mongol and Yuan studies. For an indispensable introduction to the research of Russian and Soviet scholars, see Elizabeth Endicott-West, "The Yuan," in *Soviet Studies of Premodern China*, ed. Gilbert Rozman (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1984), 97–110.

² This program was founded in 1948 in part by former students of the great American Asianist Owen Lattimore of Johns Hopkins University.

³ Sadly, Herbert Franke passed away in June 2011.

⁴ See the Chinese translation by Shi Weimin 史卫民 and others of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Note the translators' annotations for some updates and corrections.

⁵ The Chinese translation is 藍德彰, "宋元法学中的'活法'". In *Meiguo xuezhe lun Zhongguo falü chuantong* 美国学者论中国法律传统 (Beijing: Zhongguo zhengfa daxue chuban she, 1994).

⁶ *Song-Yuan shidai de funü, caichan, he rujia fanying* (960–1368) 宋元时代的妇女, 财产, 和儒家反应 (960–1368), trans. by Liu Xiao 刘晓 and Xue Jingyu 薛京玉. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, forthcoming.

⁷ This sentence is deleted in the Chinese version of this essay.

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Mongolian Studies

Monumenta Serica

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Ming History

Three Hundred Years of History Still Searching for Recognition

Martin J. Heijdra

Introduction

The following essay is my personal view of the field of Ming studies, based mainly, though not exclusively, on a thorough examination of the journal *Ming Studies*. This journal combines the functions of a scholarly journal with those of a newsletter announcing recent and future activities of the field and providing a forum for exchange. It can be compared to such journals as *Early Medieval China* or the *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*.

In the United States, such a journal is probably not the place where the most important research is presented: that would happen in more prestigious journals such as the *Journal of Asian Studies* or the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*. *Ming Studies* is, however, the place where younger scholars might publish their articles or reviews, and where important book reviews or occasionally review articles by senior or younger scholars are published. Therefore, it is through the pages of this journal (and its reports on the activities of the associated Society for Ming Studies, which was founded subsequently) that the Ming “field” is best approached.

Ming Studies is not intended as a North-America-only journal. Therefore, although this book limits itself to North American research, it is artificial to exclude English-language scholarship from Australia, Europe, and Asia. Therefore I have occasionally made exceptions.

A final caution: I only list names of significant scholars here with the greatest reservation. The selection I make is highly personal and circumscribed greatly by my limited knowledge and personal preferences. Listing all names is impossible, and listing none unsatisfactory; unfortunately, anything in between is necessarily flawed. I apologize to anyone who should have been listed but is not.

Before the Founding of Ming Studies, 1950-1975

In 1968 an unprecedented Ming directory was compiled by a group of American scholars of the Ming who had met informally in Taiwan.¹ This directory, based on an international questionnaire, was intended to supplement the recently published European and Japanese bibliographies on the Ming field by Franke and Yamane,² and to facilitate communication within the field of Ming studies, which had begun to flourish in Japan and spill over into the United States.

Significantly, only a few scholars in this directory born before 1930 had recently published monographs on the Ming period. Wing-tsit Chan (1901–94) had published a translation of works of Wang Yang-ming in 1963.³ His colleague William Theodore de Bary (1919–99) at Columbia University had just organized in 1966 a conference titled *Self and Society in Ming Thought*,⁴ and had begun to train students in Ming intellectual history, especially neo-Confucianism, one of whom was Ronald Dimberg,⁵ one of the compilers of the directory. At Columbia there were other scholars in Ming studies: C. T. Hsia (1921–)⁶ and John Meskill.

The directory made clear that Ming publications at this time were not yet very fashionable.⁷ However, two scholars who, together with de Bary, can be called the founders of Ming history in the United States had just published their first major works. At the University of Michigan, Charles O. Hucker (1919–94) had published the fundamental *The Censorial System of Ming China* in 1966,⁸ which had been preceded in 1961 by his short but very influential *The Traditional Chinese State in Ming Times*.⁹ At Princeton Frederick W. Mote (1922–2005),¹⁰ trained in China by Wang Chongwu and at the University of Washington by Hsiao Kung-chuan (1897–1981), had begun to teach his own PhD students, beginning with Hok-lam Chan and William S. Atwell. At the University of Chicago, Ho Ping-ti had begun to teach. He had already published two highly influential works that spanned the Ming and Qing periods: *Studies on the Population of China*,¹¹ and *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China*.¹²

However, it is the not negligible number of scholars born in the 1930s listed in the directory as working on, or having just finished, their dissertations that shows that Ming studies was beginning to reach a critical mass of practitioners. Names to be mentioned here are John W. Dardess, Edward L. Dreyer, Edward L. Farmer, John D. Langlois Jr., Jonathan D. Spence, Romeyn Taylor, Frederic Wakeman Jr., (1937–2006), and John E. Wills Jr.¹³ Only slightly older were So Kwan-wai, John Meskill, and James B. Parsons.¹⁴

Many of these scholars would be involved in the major Ming Biographical History Project of the AAS (Association for Asian Studies), organized at Columbia University under the direction of L. Carrington Goodrich (1894–1986), together with Chao-ying Fang (1908–85) and Tu Lien-che Fang (1902–94), the latter two having been persuaded to leave Australia by de Bary. The already mentioned conference directed by de Bary was related to this project.

In the very first issue of *Ming Studies*, Roland Higgins presented a compilation of doctoral dissertations on the Ming dynasty from 1945 to 1975.¹⁵ It is interesting to take a closer look at this, which will serve as a recapitulation of this period. Of the 140 dissertations listed, 91 were from North American universities, an average of some 3 dissertations a year. As for institutions, Columbia led the field with 17 before Harvard with 15, Chicago with 10, then Yale (7), Berkeley, Washington, and Indiana (5 each), and Princeton, Michigan, and St. John's (4 each). The remainder were divided between twelve other institutions. On subject most dissertations were devoted to the various branches of literature with 18, before political history with 16, the traditional topic of East-West relations with no fewer than 15, the newly popular intellectual history with 12, the traditional art and the newer social history with 8 each, and the still newer economic history with 7.

The new situation became clearer in the same article with the listing of dissertations in progress. Of the 33 US dissertations listed, Columbia (with de Bary), Princeton (with Mote), and Michigan (with Hucker) shared the lead with 5 each, followed by Chicago and Harvard (4 each), and 7 institutions

elsewhere. Intellectual history led qua subject with 9, art and literature were old standbys (and internally very varied) with 7 and 6 respectively, while politics and social history had 5 each. Economic history was definitely more popular among the English-language dissertations outside the United States. The subject of overseas connections had almost disappeared.

The First Ten Years of Ming Studies, 1975-1985

The Founding of Ming Studies, 1975–1980

In 1975 the journal *Ming Studies* was founded as an informal vehicle for the now rapidly developing Ming field, with Farmer as editor and the scholars Hok-lam Chan, Dardess, Dimberg, Dreyer, Evelyn Rawski, Joanna Handlin (Joanna Handlin Smith), Ray Huang (1918–2000), and Wei-ming Tu as founding sponsors. At that time, the Qing and Song fields already had such journals. The journal soon acquired a group of “advisers” who were clearly seen as the foremost practitioners of Ming studies in the West: de Bary, Goodrich, Hucker, and Mote, along with Wolfgang Franke (1912–2007) at the Universität Hamburg.¹⁶

Some of the goals of the newsletter were to report on major conferences in the field,¹⁷ including especially panels at the annual AAS conferences and the journal’s own open meetings there, and to keep scholars abreast of studies done elsewhere: Europe, Japan, Taiwan, the Soviet Union, and, beginning in 1979, also the People’s Republic of China (PRC). For example, when in June 1979 ten specialists in the Ming and Qing periods visited the PRC as guests of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, *Ming Studies* published in-depth reports on this visit.¹⁸ At that time, Hucker commented, “There seems little reason to expect major contributions (i.e., from PRC scholars) regarding the general and institutional history of Ming China in the near future,” although the commitment to sprouts and rebellion debates was “an intense and apparently genuine one, not solely a response to political guidelines.”¹⁹ Yet other US scholars, such as Rawski and Mi Chu Wiens, began to judge PRC scholarship more favorably, undoubtedly because they belonged to a younger generation of US sinologists for whom social and economic studies were not necessarily equated with “Marxist reductionist” ideas. (The influence of the great French, English, and other European historians who had expanded history beyond the old-fashioned political-institutional narrative had then just barely begun in the United States.)

The timing for the new journal was right. The year 1976 saw the publication of the *Dictionary of Ming Biography*,²⁰ one of the two greatest contributions of Western authors to the study of the Ming period (see below). Partly in connection with this publishing event, Hucker directed a session titled “The State of Ming Studies” at the AAS annual meetings in 1976. Ray Huang spoke on institutions, Rawski on Ming society and the economy, de Bary on Ming thought, Cyril Birch on literature, and Richard Edwards on the arts.

A general impression of this period may be gleaned from a list of completed dissertations from 1976–80.²¹ Fifty-two US dissertations were listed, with Columbia accounting for 8, Harvard for 7, Chicago and Michigan each for 5, and Minnesota for 4, with 15 other institutions sharing the remainder. The ranking by subject classification was led by foreign relations or foreign countries (12, an inflated number since this category included the many PhDs on Korea or Japan), followed by intellectual history (11), political-institutional history (8), literature (7), and art and religion (4 each).

Rather conspicuously absent was social history. It is revealing to compare these figures with those of the 1980–95 period given below.²²

The “Dictionary of Ming Biography”

As mentioned above, the first major achievement of North American sinologists specializing in Ming history was the *Dictionary of Ming Biography* (usually abbreviated as the *DMB*), which in scholarship and sophistication surpassed even Arthur W. Hummel’s *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period (ECCP)*.²³ The work, a cooperative effort of scholars in various stages of their careers edited at Columbia, has after half a century not lost any of its usefulness. Its general scope is broader and its articles go deeper than its Qing predecessor and are based on extensive original research and source discovery. Since the *DMB* entries are studies in themselves, based on a total command of the relevant sources, it is ridiculous to complain that Western scholars cite the *DMB* “rather than the more authoritative *Ming shi* biographies.”²⁴

Preliminary conferences were held under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies: in 1965 a Research Conference on Ming Government,²⁵ and in 1966 the already mentioned Conference on Ming Thought.

The *DMB* was a complex international undertaking. It was produced under the aegis of a 17-member committee, founded in 1960 by the AAS, and was funded by a wide variety of named and anonymous donors, including 20 colleges and universities. A total of 125 scholars from at least 17 different countries contributed some 650 entries.

Columbia and Princeton

The *DMB* had established Columbia as a major Ming center. In 1974 also the Regional Seminar in Neo-Confucian Studies was established there, which brought together twenty-six scholars of eighteen institutions in the eastern United States. De Bary and Wing-tsit Chan were the major figures in these seminars, but a large group of later well-known scholars of Chinese intellectual history participated: Julia Ching, Irene Bloom, Judith Berling, Pei-yi Wu, Rodney Taylor, Willard Peterson, David Mungello, Kristin Yü Greenblatt (Yü Chün-fang), and Joanna Handlin (Joanna Handlin Smith).

At Columbia the Japanese hypothesis that major changes in intellectual thought had taken place in the late Ming–early Qing period was very influential and developed further. At Princeton, on the other hand, China-educated F. W. Mote and his students tended to treat the Ming period as Chinese scholars traditionally had done: as the last purely Chinese dynasty, to be contrasted with the later Manchu-infected Qing dynasty. Mote insisted on the uniqueness of China and argued against the tendency to apply too readily Western-derived theories to the history of China. Traditional Chinese historical and literary accounts rather than general theories were the primary bases of the dissertations pursued there. Mote himself published infrequently. Fortunately, in his retirement he would publish a wide-ranging statement of his views in *Imperial China, 900–1800*.²⁶

In May 1978 the National Endowment for the Humanities announced approval of the funding for volumes 7 and 8 of *The Cambridge History of China (CHC)*, with F. W. Mote and Denis Twitchett as coeditors. The project was to be based at Princeton University with its outstanding collections on

Ming history available in the Gest Oriental Library; stipends and residence and summer grants were made available, and colloquia and workshops would be held. Solicited authors at this time were, in addition to names already met with (Dreyer, Hucker, H. L. Chan, Huang, Atwell, Struve, Twitchett, and Tu), Joseph Fletcher, Wang Gungwu, Kuei-sheng Chang, and Yü Chün-fang.²⁷ James Geiss was the practical coordinator of this Ming History Project. A first summer workshop for the *CHC* was held in 1979, with a second one in 1980.²⁸

The work would move forward rather slowly; Charles O. Hucker, for example, would publish his *The Ming Dynasty: Its Origins and Evolving Institutions*,²⁹ originally written for the *CHC* in 1970, separately in 1978. In this work some major themes are visible that were shared by many other Ming historians but challenged widespread assumptions held by others outside the field: that the Ming period was partly a continuation of the Mongol Yuan period rather than a nationalistic reaction against it; and that the Ming was to be seen as a relatively stable and effective period, with the following Qing preserving, not challenging, its fundamental structure.

The Expansion of Ming Studies, 1981–1985

In the pages of *Ming Studies* during these years the excitement of increased interaction with the PRC is visible in many places. In these early years, American scholars would participate in, and report in detail on, the Ming scholarly conferences in the PRC and elsewhere,³⁰ although the enthusiasm was soon to fade. (By the 1990s the direction of exchange would reverse itself, and rather than US scholars reporting on conferences in China, overviews on the state of the field in the PRC would be given by Chinese students and scholars studying in, or visiting, the United States.) With the increased attention paid to Chinese scholarship, the volume of translated Japanese scholarship by Linda Grove and Christian Daniels, *State and Society in China: Japanese Perspectives of Ming-Qing Social and Economic History*,³¹ was the more welcome since concomitantly with the enthusiasm occasioned by the opening of mainland China for research the knowledge of and interest in Japanese studies on China had definitely declined.

In 1981 Ray Huang's *1587, a Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline* was nominated for the annual American Book Award in history.³² The book became hugely popular among the general public, outside rather than within the Ming field. Its message of "decline," narrowly deduced from the personal characteristics of the emperor, rather clashed with the view scholars were slowly building of a vigorously developing late Ming intellectual and socioeconomic environment. The book was soon translated into Chinese, German, Japanese, and French.

Some of the issues discussed in this period can profitably be investigated through the occasional extended review essays in *Ming Studies*. For instance, Ann Waltner's "Building on the Ladder of Success" discusses the contentious question of whether traditional China experienced exceptionally high rates of social mobility (as Ho Ping-ti had maintained) or whether the criteria used for such an evaluation (service in high office) had been too narrow and had severely underestimated the degree to which landholding and social status remained confined to a rather closed local elite (as Beattie had shown).³³

The period³⁴ came to a close, however, with a major scholarly debate when Princeton-based F. W.

Mote severely criticized the Columbia-based William Theodore de Bary on the content of his 1982 lectures in honor of Qian Mu.³⁵

According to Mote, de Bary had excessively ascribed ever more comprehensive and abstract metaphysical, ethical, and religious qualities to neo-Confucianism, neglecting its philological and critical scholarly tradition, and ignored the social and political background of intellectual ideas, even explaining political events only in terms of their supposed intellectual content. De Bary replied a few issues later, arguing that Mote was much too definite in his interpretation of Confucian terms, each of which had too long a development to allow for unambiguous solutions, and that for him much more important than the question of whether Wang Yangming 王阳明 or Zhu Xi 朱熹 was the authentic spokesmen for neo-Confucianism was the tension between the two strains. He defended the opinion that “ideas matter.” He did not persuade Mote, and in a counterreply Mote stated that most of de Bary’s reply just used the kind of arguments he objected to in the first place.³⁶

Newer Subjects, Less Integration, 1985-1995

With its ten-year anniversary in 1985 *Ming Studies* witnessed a change of editor and board. Hucker, de Bary, and Mote were replaced with Andrew H. B. Lo, Peterson, and Struve. Atwell became the new editor, Handlin Smith the review editor (later replaced by Katherine Carlitz). *Ming Studies* existed now in an international environment of similar journals, the slightly older *Mindaishi kenkyū* 明代史研究 in Japan (1974–), *Mingshi yanjiu zhuankan* 明史研究专刊 in Taiwan (1978–), and *Mingshi yanjiu luncong* 明史研究论丛 in the PRC (1982–, later joined by *Mingshi yanjiu* 明史研究, 1991–). These journals would be joined by the Italian *Ming Qing yanjiu* in 1992. Princeton, Columbia and Michigan, were joined by the University of Minnesota as Ming studies centers by where Farmer, Waltner, and Taylor taught. There existed there a deeper awareness of some of the larger issues debated by historians of other regions of the world than in the older centers, whether those grand schemes were seen as applicable to China or criticized as Eurocentric. But in general in this period it becomes much less useful to speak of “centers.” There was just a greater number of students, and a larger, eclectic variety of approaches.

The period began in high spirits; the summer sessions held in conjunction with the *CHC* had energized the field. Some basic research materials were published: Hucker’s *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*,³⁷ Mote and Howard L. Goodman’s *A Research Manual for Ming History* (a guide on how to use the *Ming shi* and its sources using Li Shimian as an example),³⁸ and Timothy Brook’s *Geographical Sources of Ming-Qing History*.³⁹ The period saw the beginning of the translation of the *Jin Ping Mei* 金瓶梅 by David T. Roy, a major event.⁴⁰

The first of the Ming volumes of the *CHC*, volume 7, *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part I*, was published in 1988, edited by Mote and Twitchett.⁴¹ It had chapters by Mote (who also wrote the introduction), Dreyer, Langlois, Hok-lam Chan, Twitchett and Tilemann Grimm, Mote again, Geiss (two chapters), Huang, Atwell, and Struve and concluded with a chapter on historical writing by Franke. The volume was arranged chronologically. The chapters were based on newly solicited research and original sources and reconstructed political and institutional life (mainly at court) in great detail. Personalities of the emperors were taken seriously.

Related to the compilation of the *CHC*, which necessitated a political and institutional account of the *whole* Ming period, the hitherto neglected mid-Ming period began to receive attention. “Ming History: Exploring the Fifteenth Century,” was the topic of two 1987 AAS meeting panels introduced by Farmer and Chu Hung-lam.⁴² The fifteenth century had long been a mystery; was it a turning point or just some kind of black hole? How successful were the efforts of the founders to influence with their elaborate legislation the shaping of Chinese society and culture? For Peterson the existence of a plurality of styles and careers, the trend away from imperial patronage in the arts and other aspects of high culture, and the reassertion of local modes of social control following the erosion of centrally imposed ones were all trends from the 1420s on. Therefore, generalizations about Ming “despotism” were widely judged to be misplaced.

This period also saw one major debate in the pages of *Ming Studies*. Yü Ying-shih severely attacked Edward T. Ch’ien’s *Chiao Hung and the Restructuring of Neo-Confucianism in the Late Ming*,⁴³ calling most of Ch’ien’s arguments “high-flying metaphysics” using an irrelevant “phenomenological-structuralist dialogical” approach. For Yü intellectual history should be based on a reconstruction of an author’s thought, but Ch’ien had not done that, and his version of intellectual history was a self-closed universe in which only abstract ideas interacted with one another. For Yü, Ch’ien’s conclusion, that a fundamentalist restructuring took place during the late Ming and early Qing, with the Lu-Wang school prevailing over the Cheng-Zhu school, was mistaken.

Ch’ien would reply later, using two neologisms in the title (and a lengthy explanation of why he used them)—“Neither Structuralism nor Lovejoy’s History of Ideas: A Disidentification with Professor Ying-shih Yü’s Review as a Dis-course”—in terms that would for some readers only justify Yü’s criticism. Ch’ien attacked Yü’s ideas of the primacy of contemporaneous over “second-hand” sources, and his focus on “originality.” But by this time the influence of the Columbia-style studies of neo-Confucianism had certainly begun to fade.

In 1997 an overview of Ming-related PhDs completed between 1980 and 1996 was presented.⁴⁴ The total number of North American Ming-related dissertations in that period was 188, an average of over 10 a year. The list by affiliation was led by Princeton (28); followed by Harvard (27); Berkeley (22); Michigan and Columbia (11 each); Chicago (9); Yale (8); Indiana (7); Kansas (mainly art), Washington, and Stanford (6 each); and Minnesota (5). Twenty-eight institutions shared the remainder. The subject list was headed by literature (with 53, constituting almost one-third of all dissertations), and art (with 38) was second. Intellectual and philosophical history followed with 24, but social history, absent in 1975–80, asserted itself with 23 dissertations. Political-institutional history followed at quite a distance (15), followed by economic history (10), religion (8), and foreign relations (7). Science, music, linguistics, and law made up the balance.

In this period a whole array of newer objects of study came to the foreground. Social history renewed itself, with innovative studies based on new sources, such as those from Huizhou 徽州,⁴⁵ or writings by merchants. The topic of Sino-Western interchanges was taken up again, and no longer dealt with individual Jesuits (of whom there were never more than a hundred over the course two hundred years) but with larger Western-Chinese interactions.⁴⁶ However, the most important new field was gender studies, in many different forms. Issue 32 of *Ming Studies* printed the articles from a 1993 AAS symposium titled *Playing with Gender in Pre-modern Chinese Drama*, with an introduction by

Waltner,⁴⁷ and other conferences on gender in literature, art, and history were under way. In art very influential became Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*,⁴⁸ which used Western theories and Chinese content to rethink the art histories of both. It was not without controversy. Was the work he discussed, the *Zhang wu zhi* 長物志 of Wen Zhenheng 文震亨, a real guide to art collection, as he implied, or on the contrary, as some critics maintained, a satire of the way the vulgar nouveaux riches approached art? In both cases, however, the work showed the commoditization of art.

Yet one cannot avoid the impression that these newer subjects were less tied into a central narrative. Only when they moved from exploratory to in-depth investigations did the realization resurface that also for such newer subjects the intellectual, political, and institutional contexts mattered, and only then did a reintegration of the different strands of historical inquiry take place. The newly founded Society for Ming Studies provided a forum where such scholars could talk to each other.⁴⁹

The Current Situation, 1995-2008

The Founding of the Society for Ming Studies

With issue 36 (1996), *Ming Studies* became a refereed journal, under editor Anita M Andrew, with as managing editor Farmer, book review editor Higgins, and a new editorial board: joining the older members Peterson and Struve were Brook, Carlitz, Kandice Hauf, Taylor, and Waltner.⁵⁰

Even more important, the Society for Ming Studies was organized formally in Washington, DC, on April 7, 1995, at a meeting held in conjunction with the AAS, as an outgrowth of discussions previously held at open “Ming Studies meetings.” Bylaws were adopted and officers elected: Farmer as president, Carlitz as vice president, and Hauf as secretary.⁵¹ A new introductory guide was announced: Farmer, Taylor, and Waltner, with the assistance of Jiang Yonglin, *Ming History: An Introductory Guide to Research*.⁵² Another basic source of this period is *The Ming-Qing Conflict, 1619–1683: A Historiography and Source Guide*.⁵³

The resurgence of Ming studies was also visible in a two-part panel at the 1997 AAS meetings titled again “The State of Ming Studies.”⁵⁴ In the nonscholarly world at large, a growing interest in Ming furniture was conspicuous. From 2002 also the need was strongly felt within the society on how to rebut Gavin Menzies’s fantasies, popularized in *1421: The Year China Discovered the World* and related TV documentaries.⁵⁵ Perhaps the best refutation would come from scholars outside the United States, in particular Geoff Wade.⁵⁶

In 2000 James Geiss (1950–2000), a major contributor to the *CHC*, died unexpectedly. His widow, Margaret Hsü, set up the James P. Geiss Foundation and began to sponsor Ming studies. The first sponsored event took place in June 2003 at Princeton with a two-day wide-ranging conference, Ming Court Culture, organized by David Robinson, applying European-style court studies to the Chinese case.⁵⁷ The foundation also partly funded the production of a compact disc by Ina Asim giving users interactive access to the historically important *Shangyuan dengcai* 上元灯彩 scroll. The foundation would also support the publication of manuscripts to appear in the revived Ming Studies Research Series.⁵⁸

One important work to appear at this time was Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*,⁵⁹ which challenged the one-sided view of the Chinese civil service

examination system as an unrelenting imperial hegemony by showing its give-and-take between courts and elites in maintaining a stable partnership of interests. Ming is the pivotal period in this book.⁶⁰ Another popular book was Timothy Brook's *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China*,⁶¹ although in a review Carlitz pointed out that the sweeping broad-brush treatments in this book needed to be combined with the more detailed work on newer topics, such as those presented by Dorothy Ko, Ellen Widmer, Lucille Chia, Robert Hegel, Martin Heijdra, Richard von Glahn, or, indeed, Brook's own, more sober treatment in the *CHC*.

"The Cambridge History of China" Completed

Indeed, by this time, 1998, the second Ming volume of the *CHC*, vol. 8, *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part 2*,⁶² had appeared. Editors Twitchett and Mote together wrote the introduction, followed by chapters on the basic institutions of the Ming regime by Hucker, Huang, and Langlois; on foreign relations by Rossabi, Clark, Wang Gungwu, Wills, and Atwell; on internal affairs by Heijdra and Brook; and finally on thought and religion by Peterson (in two chapters), Taylor, Yü Chün-fang, and Berling. Perhaps unlike the first Ming volume, there was no one consolidated view: the field had become too specialized and fragmented by then. There were clearly tensions between those, like Huang, who were of the opinion that the Ming founder had put the dynasty in a straightjacket, leading to inevitable decline, and those who did not see it that way (Heijdra, Brook). Art and literature had deliberately been excluded.⁶³ Newer themes such as medicine, science, cities, printing, gender, and family and lineage were only addressed in passing. Yet Dardess, in a review, was "thankful for what we have been given. Much of it is new. *Cambridge History* coverage of the Ming is now complete, at least for this generation."⁶⁴

Newer Fields

While the overviews of the 1997 State of Ming Studies panel could be said to have been delivered by more or less established scholars on established topics, elsewhere at the same conference younger scholars addressed three rapidly expanding newer fields, on reading and writing,⁶⁵ the history of the book,⁶⁶ and science, especially medicine. For example, in the latter field the effects and contexts of illness were treated economically, socially, and intellectually.⁶⁷ Other papers at that conference were on such varied topics as female homoeroticism, travel writing, and Taoist ritual, while music and dance were also beginning to get their due.

Craig Clunas became very prolific. In 1996 he published *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*.⁶⁸ It was quickly followed by *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*,⁶⁹ *Elegant Debts: The Social Art of Wen Zhengming, 1470–1559*,⁷⁰ and *Empire of Great Brightness*.⁷¹ He warranted two review essays. First Timothy Brook, in "Picturing Clunas,"⁷² found Clunas somewhat disorganized and sometimes deliberately provocative in the use of Western discourses; yet he appreciated the force of Clunas's work to encourage a new appreciation of visual objects and what they meant to those who made and used them. Jennifer Purtle wrote the second: "Even Exchange: Craig Clunas' *Elegant Debts* and What Art History and Sinology Offer Each Other."⁷³ As Purtle put it, Clunas had tried to write cutting-edge Euro-American art history about a Chinese painter, and this at a time when Chinese painting

no longer dominated Chinese art history as it once did.⁷⁴ Purtle did not find Clunas totally successful, writing that “readers may find themselves wanting a narrative of mid-Ming artistic production less perfectly forged in, or translated into, the terms of Early Modern Europe.” But undoubtedly the field of material culture developed under Clunas’s influence, and a panel was devoted to it at the 2007 Society for Ming Studies meeting.

Other, more traditional subjects formed the focus of extensive symposia: Zhu Yuanzhang remained popular, beginning with a 2001 panel at the AAS meetings, then a special issue of *Ming Studies* (50 [Fall 2004]),⁷⁵ and then a Geiss Foundation–sponsored International Conference on Ming Taizu and His Times held in Hong Kong in 2006. Wang Shizhen was the subject of a symposium at Leiden and two special issues of *Ming Studies*,⁷⁶ and even the Wanli emperor would be rehabilitated after Ray Huang’s attack.⁷⁷ Another resurfacing topic was law and the concept of justice and their relationship to fields such as literature.

The ubiquitous Zhu Yuanzhang occasioned one interesting debate, that between Sarah Schneewind and Richard von Glahn.⁷⁸ The latter had treated the Song–Yuan–early Ming period as a coherent period of growth,⁷⁹ but he had cast Zhu Yuanzhang and his policies as villains to explain “the fourteenth-century decline.” Schneewind asked for more evidence that there indeed had been such a decline, and that it was instigated by early Ming policies. At issue was the question of whether the early and mid-Ming centuries were to be seen as a successful founding and legal starting point that was followed by socioeconomic stagnation when that system broke down or whether that very system resulted in widespread socio-economic stagnation, which could only improve after the system broke down. In that in neither view a linearly developing or inherently stagnant Ming period is assumed, both are an improvement on the usual view of the Ming as merely pre-Qing. However, while von Glahn responded with a wealth of supporting material for his thesis, he largely deployed exactly the kind of uncritical scholarship that already is predisposed for a deprecatory answer.

In 2009 the journal *Ming Studies* was to move from Minnesota to a commercial publisher, Maney Publishing (Leeds, UK). The maintenance of the journal could no longer continue as an adjunct to teaching and research. However, it is hoped that it will continue as the central axis around which the various trends in Ming scholarship find each other. Judging from the number of books published, the field is thriving.⁸⁰

Conclusion

The above history shows the not inconsiderable achievements of Ming studies in North America. Yet an observer may be excused in thinking that Qing studies are actually more popular. This is in a significant sense the legacy of the prevalent notion that archival-based history is the *only* legitimate way of doing history. Any period for which such archives are not extant is seen as “static” and “nonchanging”—hence the often openly expressed disdain for the Ming period, exacerbating other negative views of the Ming as “typically feudal.” The application of the most current techniques and theories from European history may possibly be successfully applied to the Qing period, but only with the greatest difficulty to the Ming period. The nature of the Ming government-compiled resources (which are secondary rather than primary sources and should constantly be critically evaluated) results

in a flattening of detail and may give not only the impression of a standardization of institutions throughout the Ming period but ultimately a view of the Ming period as “stagnant.” And hence, by American Qing scholars and Chinese Ming scholars alike, Ming history is often reduced to a mere “pre-Qing period” and the Qing seen as a higher-level culmination of a lower-level Ming period.

Similar remarks may be made about the currently fashionable macrocomparisons between China and Europe.⁸¹ These deal largely with the Qing period, and their views of the Ming are those of American Qing or Chinese Ming scholars rather than American Ming researchers.

Thus, what is left out in such views are the efforts from many American Ming scholars to critically evaluate the standard secondary and often stereotypical accounts against what might be gathered from the much more dispersed and unsystematic extant private or local literature. When that is done, the image of a standardized and stagnant Ming quickly disappears, which certainly makes Song-Yuan-Ming-Qing historical development much more complicated and much less linear.

It is true that the stereotypical negative views of the Ming are slowly changing among a certain group of Qing scholars, who, in search of the origins of “their” phenomena, are now much more likely to write books “from 1500 to 1900” or on “late imperial China” (and, less often, “early modern China”). Yet describing the origins of later phenomena in a previous period rarely does that earlier period full justice. Much rarer are those Song scholars trying to link the Song through the Yuan with the Ming, although one might hope that the few examples recently published will initiate a trend.

I want to end on a positive note. One strength that Ming historical studies do possess is the greater place given to nonpolitical or nonintellectual historical factors, partly because such topics as the rise of the novel or the trend toward literati painting in the Ming have always been seen as major turning points for literary and art historical studies. Such topics are not only treated in specialized monographs; they are occasionally integrated into the best general historical studies as well, including biographical or network studies of individuals. More recently the place of gender, material culture, book history, medicine, science, religion, or music has been added to this mix. Since certainly the Ming literati did participate in all these contexts, it may be possible to say that such Ming individuals are better understood, and less compartmentalized, than comparable figures in later times. Scholars attracted to such interdisciplinary studies might call their period of study “late imperial China” rather than limiting themselves to the Ming alone, but integration remains key.⁸²

Notes

Martin J. Heijdra, after studying Sinology and Japanology in Leiden, Beijing, and Kyoto, came to Princeton University to study Ming socioeconomic history with F. W. Mote and later D. W. Twitchett. An abridged version of his dissertation was published in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part 2* (1998). From 2003 to 2005 he served as president of the Society for Ming Studies. He became the Chinese bibliographer at Princeton's East Asian Library in 1988, and since then some of his research has been directed to book history (see, e.g., "The Development of Modern Typography in East Asia, 1850–2000," *East Asian Library Journal* 11:2 [2004], and other articles given at conferences in Japan, the United States, England, and Taiwan). In the library world he is active on a national level, in particular dealing with technical issues, and is part of the Advisory Committee for the *Bibliography of Asian Studies*.

This article was written in August 2009; except for note 63 and 82, no changes have been made, except for some corrections.

¹ Ronald Dimberg, Edward L. Farmer, Robert L. Irick, comps., *A Ming Directory, 1968*. Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1968. Because of space limitations, in citations I will largely omit subtitles, even if one of the characteristics of American publications is their relative importance.

² Wolfgang Franke, *An Introduction to the Sources of Ming History*. University of Malaya Press, 1968; Yamane Yukio, *Mindaishi kenkyū bunken mokuroku*. Tōyō Bunko Mindaishi Kenkyūshitsu, 1960.

³ Wing-tsit Chan, trans., *Instructions for Practical Living and Other Neo-Confucian Writings by Wang Yang-ming*. Columbia University Press, 1963.

⁴ The papers from this conference were published in *Self and Society in Ming Thought*. Columbia University Press, 1970. This was followed by *The Unfolding of Neo-Confucianism*. Columbia University Press, 1975.

⁵ Ronald G. Dimberg, *The Sage and Society*. University of Hawai'i Press, 1974.

⁶ C. T. Hsia, *The Classic Chinese Novel*. Columbia University Press, 1968.

⁷ For example, Albert Chan's (1915–2005) *The Glory and Fall of the Ming Dynasty* was listed as due in 1967 but would only appear in 1982 (University of Oklahoma Press).

⁸ Charles O. Hucker, *The Censorial System of Ming China*. Stanford University Press, 1966. For more information, see also the special issue in honor of Hucker, *Ming Studies* (hereafter cited as *MS*) 40 (Fall 1998), especially the article by Romeyn Taylor, "Some Observations on the Life and Career of Charles Oscar Hucker, 1919–1994: A Personal Note," 13–32.

⁹ Charles O. Hucker, *The Traditional Chinese State in Ming Times*. University of Arizona Press.

¹⁰ *The poet Kao Ch'z*. Princeton University Press, 1962. See also his obituary in *MS* 50 (Fall 2004): 1–11.

¹¹ Ho Ping-ti, *Studies on the Population of China*. Harvard University Press, 1959.

¹² Ho Ping-ti, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China*. Columbia University Press, 1962. Other works published before 1968 that must be mentioned are Charles R. Boxer, trans., *South China in the Sixteenth Century*. Hakluyt Society, 1953; Louis J. Gallagher, trans., *China in the Sixteenth Century*. Random House, 1953; Wang I-t'ung, *Official relations between China and Japan, 1368–1549*. Harvard University Press, 1953; Cyril Birch, trans., *Stories from a Ming Collection*. Bodley Head, 1958; George H. Dunne, *Generation of Giants*. Burns and Oates, 1962; and Donald F. Lach, with Edwin J. van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, 3 vols. in 9 pts. University of Chicago Press, 1965–93.

¹³ Some of their earliest books are John W. Dardess, *Conquerors and Confucians*. Columbia University Press, 1973; Edward L. Dreyer et al., *Chinese Ways in Warfare*. Harvard University Press, 1974; Edward L. Farmer, *Early Ming Government*. Harvard University Press, 1976; John D. Langlois Jr., ed., *China under Mongol Rule*. Princeton University Press, 1981; Frederic Wakeman Jr. and Carolyn Grant, eds., *Conflict and Control in Late Imperial China*. University of California Press, 1975; and Jonathan D. Spence and John E. Wills Jr., eds., *From Ming to Ch'ing*. Yale University Press, 1979. Other general and important works of the period 1968–75 are Henri Serruys, *Sino-Mongol Relations during the Ming*, 3 vols. Institut belge des hautes études chinoises, 1967–80; Dwight H. Perkins, *Agricultural Development in China, 1368–1968*. Aldine, 1969; Evelyn Rawski, *Agrarian Change and the Peasant Economy of South China*. Harvard University Press, 1972; Ray Huang, *Taxation and Governmental Finance in Sixteenth-Century Ming China*. Cambridge University Press, 1974; and Morris Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia from 1368 to the Present Day*. Pica Press, 1975.

¹⁴ Some of their earliest books include So Kwan-wai, *Japanese Piracy in Ming China during the 16th Century*. Michigan State University Press, 1975; John Meskill, trans., *Ch'oe Pu's Diary*. University of Arizona Press, 1965; and James Parsons, *The Peasant Rebellions of the Late Ming Dynasty*. University of Arizona Press, 1970.

¹⁵ Roland L. Higgins, “Doctoral Dissertations of the Ming Dynasty,” *MS 1* (Fall 1975): 36–59. As in the following, the compilation of these data by affiliation and subject is mine.

¹⁶ See his obituary in *MS 57* (Spring 2008): 1–23.

¹⁷ These included the 1974 From Ming to Ch'ing conference at Palm Springs and the 1977 symposium Traces of the Brush: Studies in Chinese Calligraphy at Yale where Shen C. Y. Fu, Tseng Yu-ho Ecke, Christian F. Murck, Wen C. Fong, and Yoshiaki Shimizu set new standards for the study of Ming art. The papers, edited by Shen Fu, were published by the Yale University Art Gallery in 1977, as *Traces of Brush: Studies in Chinese Calligraphy*.

¹⁸ The Ming specialists were Hucker, Langlois, Willard Peterson, Lynn Struve, and John E. Wills Jr. The Qing specialists were Philip Kuhn, Susan Naquin, Rawski, and Wang Yeh-chien. The chair was Frederic Wakeman. See also Frederic Wakeman Jr., ed., *Ming and Qing Historical Studies in the People's Republic of China*. Center for Chinese Studies, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1980. A later, similarly important exchange meeting was the 1980 US-PRC Symposium on Social and Economic History in China from the Song Dynasty to 1900, held in Beijing, with as American participants Albert Feuerwerker, G. William Skinner, Atwell, Fu-mei Chang Chen, Jerry Dennerline, Robert M. Hartwell, Brian McKnight, Rawski, Gilbert Rozman, and Wang Yeh-chien. The official report was published as *Chinese Social and Economic History from the Song to 1900*. Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1982, edited by Albert Feuerwerker.

¹⁹ Charles O. Hucker, “Report of a 1979 Visit to China with the Ming-Qing Delegation,” *MS 9* (Fall 1979): 5–11, quotations from 8 and 9.

²⁰ The Ming Biographical History Project of the Association for Asian Studies, L. Carrington Goodrich and Chaoying Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368-1644*. 2 vols. Columbia University Press, 1976.

²¹ The list was published in *MS* 12 (Spring 1981): 14–25. Since many dissertations on other periods or even countries were included, the data are not completely reliable.

²² Other books from the 1975–80 period that must be mentioned are Daniel L. Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion*. Harvard University Press, 1976; David B. Chan, *The Usurpation of the Prince of Yen*. Chinese Materials Center, 1976; Anthony C. Yu, trans., *The Journey to the West*, 4 vols. University of Chicago Press, 1977–83; Chu-Tsing Li and James C. Y. Watt, eds., *The Chinese Scholar's Studio*. Asia Society, 1978; James Cahill, *Parting at the Shore*. Weatherhill, 1978; Jonathan D. Spence, *The Death of Woman Wang*. Viking, 1978; Willard Peterson, *Bitter Gourd: Fang I-chih and the Impetus for Intellectual Change in the Ming*. Yale University Press, 1978; Evelyn Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*. University of Michigan Press, 1979 (to be read with the review by W. L. Idema in *T'oung Pao* 66:4–5 [1980]); Hilary J. Beattie, *Land and Lineage in China*. Cambridge University Press, 1979; Cyril Birch, trans., *The Peony Pavilion*. Indiana University Press, 1980; Jean Mulligan, trans., *The Lute*. Columbia University Press, 1980; and Judith A. Berling, *The Syncretic Religion of Lin Chao-en*. Columbia University Press, 1980.

²³ Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*. US Government Printing Office, 1943–44.

²⁴ Zhang Dexin has done this, for example, in a mean-spirited review of volume 7 of *The Cambridge History of China*; see its translation in *MS* 43 (Spring 2000): 79–93, p. 91. Originally published in *Social Sciences in China* 13:2 (Summer 1997): 165–76.

²⁵ The papers of which are published as Charles O. Hucker, ed., *Chinese Government in Ming Times*. Columbia University Press, 1969.

²⁶ F. W. Mote, *Imperial China, 900–1800*. Harvard University Press, 1999. For a list of his works, see *MS* 51–52 (Spring–Fall, 2005): 12–21.

²⁷ Not all of these would complete their drafts.

²⁸ At the latter major conference, panels were presented on government and administration (Hucker, Langlois, Huang), intellectual history (Peterson, the German Tilemann Grimm, Chün-fang Yü, Judith Berling), foreign affairs (Wang Gungwu, D. Clark, Chang Kuei-sheng), and socioeconomic history (Twitchett, Atwell, Huang). Newly announced chapter writers were Murck, Geiss, and Amano Motonosuke.

²⁹ Charles O. Hucker, *The Ming Dynasty: Its Origins and Evolving Institutions*. Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1978.

³⁰ The most extensive such introduction was published in *MS* 11 (Fall 1980), 1–22, and included detailed notes of conferences and meetings in the PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan by Farmer and Taylor.

³¹ Linda Grove and Christian Daniels, eds. *State and Society in China: Japanese Perspectives of Ming-Qing Social and Economic History*. University of Tokyo Press, 1984.

³² Ray Huang, *1587, a Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline*. Yale University Press, 1981.

³³ Ann Waltner, “Building on the Ladder of Success: The Ladder of Success in Imperial China and Recent Work in Social Mobility,” *MS* 17 (Fall 1983): 30–36.

³⁴ Important books published between 1981 and 1985 were Ann Paludan, *The Imperial Ming Tombs*. Yale University Press, 1981; Jerry Dennerline, *The Chia-ting Loyalists*. Yale University Press, 1981; Patrick Hanan, *The*

Chinese Vernacular Story. Harvard University Press, 1981; Robert E. Hegel, *The Novel in Seventeenth-Century China*. Columbia University Press, 1981; Yü Chün-fang, *The Renewal of Buddhism in China*. Columbia University Press, 1981; Wm. Theodore de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart*. Columbia University Press, 1981; Leif Littrup, *Subbureaucratic Government in China in Ming Times*. Universitetsforlaget, 1981; Edward L. Dreyer, *Early Ming China*. Stanford University Press, 1982; Morris Rossabi, *The Jurchen in Yüan and Ming*. Cornell China-Japan Program, 1982; James Cahill, *The Compelling Image*. Harvard University Press, 1982; John Meskill, *Academies in Ming China*. Association for Asian Studies, 1982; Joanna Handlin, *Action in Late Ming Thought*. University of California Press, 1983; John W. Dardess, *Confucianism and Autocracy*. University of California Press, 1983; Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology*. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984 (rev. ed., 2001); Djang Chu, trans., *A Complete Book Concerning Happiness and Benevolence*. University of Arizona Press, 1984; John B. Henderson, *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology*. Columbia University Press, 1984; Lynn A. Struve, *The Southern Ming*. Yale University Press, 1984; Keith Hazelton, *A Synchronic Chinese-Western Daily Calendar, 1361–1661 AD*. Ming Studies, 1984; David Johnson, Andrew Nathan, and Evelyn Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*. University of California Press, 1985; Frederic Wakeman Jr., *The Great Enterprise*. University of California Press, 1985; W. L. Idema, *The Dramatic Oeuvre of Chu Yu-tun*. Brill, 1985; David E. Mungello, *Curious Land*. F. Steiner Verlag, 1985; and Jonathan D. Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*. Penguin, 1985.

³⁵ Wm. Theodore de Bary, *The Liberal Tradition in China*. Chinese University Press, 1983. Mote's review article was "The Limits of Intellectual History?," *MS* 19 (Fall 1984): 17–25.

³⁶ He was answered by de Bary in "Reply," *MS* 21 (Spring 1986): 77–92, and reanswered by Mote in "Surrejoinder" in the same issue, 93–94.

³⁷ Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*. Stanford University Press, 1985.

³⁸ F. W. Mote and Howard L. Goodman, *A Research Manual for Ming History*: 2 vols. Chinese Linguistics Project, Princeton University, 1985.

³⁹ Timothy Brook, *Geographical Sources of Ming-Qing History*. Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1988 (2nd ed., 2002).

⁴⁰ David Tod Roy, trans., *The Plum in the Golden Vase; or, Chin P'ing Mei*, 4 vols. published so far. Princeton University Press, 1993–. The *Hongloumeng* 红楼梦 has already seen two major scholarly translations, by David Hawkes as *The Story of the Stone*, 5 vols. Penguin, 1973–86; and by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang as *A Dream of Red Mansions*, 3 vols. Foreign Language Press, 1978–80.

⁴¹ *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 7: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part I*, ed. F. W. Mote and D. W. Twitchett. Cambridge University Press, 1988.

⁴² The papers were published in *MS* 26 and 27. Presenters or discussants were Mi Chu Wiens, Elliott Sperling, Dardess, Carlitz, Brokaw, Liscomb, Kwang-ching Liu, and Peterson.

⁴³ Edward T. Ch'ien, *Chiao Hung and the Restructuring of Neo-Confucianism in the Late Ming*. Columbia University Press, 1986. Yü's article was "The Intellectual World of Chiao Hung Revisited," *MS* 25 (Spring 1988): 24–66; Ch'ien's reply was in *MS* 31 (Spring 1991): 42–86.

⁴⁴ Dietrich Tschanz, "Doctoral Dissertations on Ming Topics, 1980–present," *MS* 38 (Fall 1997): 86–112.

⁴⁵ For example, see Harriet T. Zurndorfer, *Change and Continuity in Chinese Local History*. Brill, 1989.

⁴⁶ See the review article by Theodore Nicholas Foss in *MS 30* (Fall 1990): 52–62, which lists thirty-six works, ranging from meeting papers collections to exhibition catalogs in French, Dutch, Italian, German, English, and Chinese (and translations from Latin, Spanish and Portuguese). The literature on Chinese-Western interactions is now most exhaustively treated in Nicolas Standaert, ed., *Handbook of Christianity in China*. Brill, 2001, which is much broader than its title implies.

⁴⁷ Mentioned as forerunners in the study of women and gender in China were Kang-i Sun Chang, Susan Mann, Dorothy Ko, Ellen Widmer, Maureen Robertson, Paul Robb, Charlotte Furth, Patricia Ebrey, Jennifer Holmgren, and Katherine Carlitz. Books on the subject ranged from Marsha Weidner, et al., *Views from Jade Terrace: Chinese Women Artists, 1300–1912*. Indianapolis Museum of Art, 1988; to T'ien Ju-K'ang, *Male Anxiety and Female Chastity*. Brill, 1988; and culminated in Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers*. Stanford University Press, 1994.

⁴⁸ Craig Clunas, *Superfluous Things*. Polity Press, 1991.

⁴⁹ Important books in this period were Philip de Heer, *The Care-taker Emperor*. Brill, 1986; Katherine Carlitz, *The Rhetoric of Chin P'ing Mei*. Indiana University Press, 1986; Julia Ching, trans., *The Records of Ming Scholars*. University of Hawai'i Press, 1987; Andrew H. Plaks, *The Four Masterworks of the Ming Novel*. Princeton University Press, 1987; Peter Perdue, *Exhausting the Earth*. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987; Ellen Widmer, *The Margins of Utopia*. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987; Chih-p'ing Chou, *Yüan Hung-tao and the Kung-an School*. Cambridge University Press, 1988; Nicolas Standaert, *Yang Tingyun, Confucian and Christian in Late Ming China*. Brill, 1988; Keith McMahon, *Causality and Containment in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Fiction*. Brill, 1988; Patrick Hanan, *The Invention of Li Yu*. Harvard University Press, 1988; Alison Harley Black, *Man and Nature in the Philosophical Thought of Wang Fu-chih*. University of Washington Press, 1989; Yoshikawa Kōjirō, John Timothy Wixted, trans., *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry*. Princeton University Press, 1989; Ann Waltner, *Getting an Heir*. University of Hawai'i Press, 1990; Arthur Waldron, *The Great Wall of China*. Cambridge University Press, 1990; Carney T. Fisher, *The Chosen One*. Allen and Unwin, 1990; David L. Rolston, ed., *How to Read the Chinese Novel*. Princeton University Press, 1990; Patrick Hanan, trans., *The Carnal Prayer Mat*. Ballantine, 1990; Pei-yi Wu, *The Confucian's Progress*. Princeton University Press, 1990; Philip C. C. Huang, *The Peasant Family and Rural Development in the Yangtze Delta, 1350–1988*. Stanford University Press, 1990; Kwang-Ching Liu, ed., *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China*. University of California Press, 1990; Kang-i Sun Chang, *The Late-Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung*. Yale University Press, 1991; James Tong, *Disorder under Heaven*. Stanford University Press, 1991; Barend ter Haar, *The White Lotus Teachings in Chinese Religious History*. Brill, 1991; Cynthia J. Brokaw, *The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit*. Princeton University Press, 1991; James C. Shih, *Chinese Rural Society in Transition*. Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1992; Patrick Hanan, trans., *A Tower for the Summer Heat*. Ballantine, 1992; Judith T. Zeitlin, *Historian of the Strange: Pu Songling and the Chinese Classical Tale*. Stanford University Press, 1993; Richard M. Barnhart, *Painters of the Great Ming*. Dallas Museum of Art, 1993; Klaas Ruitenbeek, *Carpentry and Building in Late Imperial China*. Brill 1993 (2nd ed., 1996); Wai-yee Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment*. Princeton University Press, 1993; Linda Cooke Johnson, ed., *Cities of Jiangnan in Late Imperial China*. State University of New York Press, 1993; Timothy Brook, *Praying for Power*. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1993; Wm. Theodore de Bary, trans., *Waiting for the Dawn*. Columbia University Press, 1993 (available much earlier in manuscript); Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China*. Stanford University Press, 1994; Alexander Woodside and Benjamin A. Elman, *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600–1900*. University of California Press, 1994; James Cahill, *The Painter's Practice*. Columbia University Press, 1994; John Meskill, *Gentlemanly Interest and Wealth on the Yangtze Delta*. Association for Asian Studies, 1994; Marsha Weidner, ed., *Latter Days of the Law*. Spencer Museum of Art, 1994; Richard E. Strassberg, trans., *Inscribed Landscapes*. University of California Press, 1994; Louise Levathes, *When China Ruled*

the Seas. Simon and Schuster, 1994; Alastair I. Johnston, *Cultural Realism*. Princeton University Press, 1995; Cyril Birch, trans., *Scenes for Mandarins*. Columbia University Press, 1995; and Edward L. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*. Brill, 1995.

⁵⁰ In 1998 Higgins was replaced as book review editor by Ken Hammond, and Andrew as editor by Carlitz in 2000. In 2003 Carlitz was replaced by Kathleen Ryor, and Hammond by Philip Kafalas. In 2007 Ryor was replaced by Hammond. In 2009 the editorial board consisted of Andrew, Ina Asim, Kimberley Besio, Brook, Carlitz, Farmer, Peterson, Leo Shin, Waltner, and Wills.

⁵¹ Over the years the following scholars would be president or president-elect: Carlitz, Hammond, Kimberley Besio, Martin Heijdra, Sarah Schneewind, Jennifer Purtle, Jiang Yonglin, and Lucille Chia. Other board members or members with other functions would be (in order of year of appointment) Kathryn Lowry, Patricia Sieber, Kai-wing Chow, Dietrich Tschanz, Joseph S. C. Lam, Handlin Smith, Hauf, Peter Ditmanson, Brook, Harriet Zurndorfer, Wills, Ryor, Asim, Kenneth Swope, Tsing Yuan, Anne Gerritsen, Joseph Dennis, Hsiung Ping-chen, Sophie Volpp, Judith Zeitlin, Carla Nappi, Bruce Rusk, Josh Yiu, Shin, Anne McLaren, Maram Epstein, Higgins, David Robinson, Noa Grass, Michael Szonyi, Chiu Peng-sheng, and Li Xinfeng.

⁵² Edward L. Farmer, Romeyn Taylor, and Ann Waltner, with Jiang Yonglin, *Ming History: An Introductory Guide to Research*. History Department, University of Minnesota, 1994.

⁵³ Lynn A. Struve, *The Ming-Qing Conflict, 1619–1683: A Historiography and Source Guide*. Association for Asian Studies, 1998.

⁵⁴ Part 1, Change and Periodization Examined, was chaired by Wills, with discussant Struve; part 2, Viewed from Various Disciplines, was chaired by Bloom, with discussant Handlin Smith. In the first panel, papers were given by Farmer, Dardess, Heijdra, and Waltner and in the second by Lam, Peterson, Roy, and Weidner.

⁵⁵ Gavin Menzies, *1421: The Year China Discovered the World*. Bantam, 2002.

⁵⁶ See <http://www.1421exposed.com/>.

⁵⁷ The conference resulted in the volume David M. Robinson, ed., *Culture, Courtiers, and Competition: The Ming Court (1368–1644)*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2008.

⁵⁸ The first volumes were Sarah Schneewind, ed., *Long Live the Emperor! Uses of the Ming Founder across Six Centuries of East Asian History*. Society for Ming Studies, 2008; and Thomas G. Nimick, *Local Administration in Ming China*. Society for Ming Studies, 2008.

⁵⁹ Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*. University of California Press, 2000.

⁶⁰ See the review by Struve in *MS* 44 (Fall 2000): 107–16.

⁶¹ Timothy Brook, *The Confusions of Pleasure: Commerce and Culture in Ming China*. University of California Press, 1998. The review article by Carlitz appeared in *MS* 39 (Spring 1998): 86–97, and compared Brook's positive view of the Ming with the more negative one presented in John W. Dardess, *A Ming Society: T'ai-ho County, Kiangsi, Fourteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*. University of California Press, 1996.

⁶² *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part 2*, ed. F. W. Mote and D. W. Twitchett. Cambridge University Press, 1998.

⁶³ In 2010 was published a scholarly overview of Chinese literature written for a wide public: Kang-i Sun Chang and Stephen Owen, eds., *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, 2 vols., in which volume 2 has chapters dealing with the Ming and early Qing from the hands of Kang-i Sun Chang, Tina Lu, Wai-ye Li, and Wilt L. Idema. The last chapter in volume 1 by Stephen H. West also deals briefly with the early Ming.

⁶⁴ John W. Dardess, review of *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 8: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part 2*, *MS* 41 (Spring 1999): 89–94.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Judith T. Zeitlin and Lydia H. Liu, *Writing and Materiality in China*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2003, and Patricia Sieber, *Theaters of Desire*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

⁶⁶ Some important works in this now popular field include Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2002; Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China*. Stanford University Press, 2004; Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow, eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*. University of California Press, 2005; Joseph P. McDermott, *A Social History of the Chinese Book*. Hong Kong University Press, 2006; and Cynthia J. Brokaw, *Commerce in Culture*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2007.

⁶⁷ One seminal article on medical history that never made it into a book is Helen Dunstan, “Late Ming Epidemics,” *Ch’ing-shih wen-t’i* 3.3 (1975): 1–59. Important for this field was the publication of Charlotte Furth, *A Flourishing Yin: Gender in China’s Medical History, 960–1665*. University of California Press, 1999. See also Charlotte Furth, Judith T. Zeitlin, and Ping-chen Hsiung, eds., *Thinking with Cases: Specialist Knowledge in Chinese Cultural History*. University of Hawai’i Press, 2007; and, on the history of science, Benjamin A. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550–1900*. Harvard University Press, 2005.

⁶⁸ Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China*. Duke University Press, 1996.

⁶⁹ Craig Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality in Early Modern China*. Reaktion Books, 1997.

⁷⁰ Craig Clunas, *Elegant Debts: The Social Art of Wen Zhengming, 1470–1559*. University of Hawai’i Press, 2004.

⁷¹ Craig Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness*. University of Hawai’i Press, 2007.

⁷² Timothy Brook, “Picturing Clunas,” *MS* 40 (Fall 1998): 117–24.

⁷³ Jennifer Purtle, “Even Exchange: Craig Clunas’ *Elegant Debts* and What Art History and Sinology Offer Each Other,” *MS* 54 (Fall 2006): 107–14.

⁷⁴ It was being replaced with studies on Buddhist art, since “questions of political power, ritual practice and use of objects, patronage, viewership, and visionary experience” resonate more with the latter. *Ibid.*, 108. The following quote in the text comes from 114.

⁷⁵ “The Image of the First Ming Emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang,” guest-edited by Sarah Schneewind, special issue, *MS* 50 (Fall 2004).

⁷⁶ “The World of Wang Shizhen,” guest-edited by Ken Hammond, special issue. Part 1 was published as *MS* 53 (Spring 2006) and part 2 as *MS* 55 (Spring 2007).

⁷⁷ This occurred at a 2005 AAS roundtable titled A Reign of Great Significance: Recasting Wanli and His Era from an Interdisciplinary Perspective.”

⁷⁸ Sarah Schneewind, “Ming Taizu *ex machina*.” *MS* 55 (Spring 2007): 104-112, and Richard von Glahn, “Ming Taizu *ex nihilo*.” *Ibid.*, 113-141.

⁷⁹ See his contributions to Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn, eds., *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2003.

⁸⁰ Books published in the last period that must be mentioned are Shih-shan Henry Tsai, *The Eunuchs of the Ming dynasty*. State University of New York Press, 1996; Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune*. University of California Press, 1996; David L. Rolston, *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary*. Stanford University Press, 1997; Theodore Hutters, R. Bin Wong, and Pauline Yu, eds., *Culture and State in Chinese History*. Stanford University Press, 1997; Robert Marks, *Tigers, Rice, Silk, and Silt*. Cambridge University Press, 1997; Anne McLaren, *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables*. Brill, 1998; Robert E. Hegel, *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*. Stanford University Press, 1998; Joseph S. C. Lam, *State Sacrifices and Music in Ming China*. State University of New York Press, 1998; Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes*. Harvard University Asia Center, 1999; Harriet T. Zurndorfer, ed., *Chinese Women in the Imperial Past*. Brill, 1999; Hok-lam Chan, *China and the Mongols*. Ashgate/Variorum, 1999; Maxwell K. Hearn and Wen C. Fong, *Along the Riverbank*. Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999; Robert E. Harrist Jr. and Wen C. Fong, *The Embodied Image*. Art Museum of Princeton University, 1999; Yang Ye, trans., *Vignettes from the Late Ming*. University of Washington Press, 1999; Norman Kutcher, *Mourning in Late Imperial China*. Cambridge University Press, 1999; Yenna Wu, *Ameliorative Satire and the Seventeenth-Century Chinese Novel*. Edwin Mellen Press, 1999; Anita M. Andrew and John A. Rapp, *Autocracy and China's Rebel Founding Emperors: Comparing Chairman Mao and Ming Taizu*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2000; Matthew H. Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China*. Stanford University Press, 2000; Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*. University of California Press, 2000; David Robinson, *Bandits, Eunuchs, and the Son of Heaven*. 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⁸¹ Examples include R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed*. Cornell University Press, 1997; and Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*. Princeton University Press, 2000.

⁸² This essay was written and finished in 2009, and no additions except for note 63 and this endnote have been made, except for some corrections. In particular, no post-2009 books are listed. In April 2011 a new round of state of the field sessions were held at the yearly AAS meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii. Ann Waltner spoke on studies on family and gender, Lucille Chia on book history, Katherine Carlitz on literature, Kathleen Ryor on art, and Edward Farmer on comparative history. Harriet Zurndorfer discussed the state of the field in Europe, Wang Hung-tai had prepared a talk on socio-cultural Ming history in Taiwan, Timothy Brook commented on the changes taking place within social history (which is moving away from a socio-economic focus), Li Xinfeng introduced Ming studies in the PRC, and Hsiung Ping-chun discussed studies in Hong Kong. The papers of Carlitz, Li and Wang have now been published in *MS* 63 (April 2011) as Katherine Carlitz, “State of the Field: the Study of Ming Literature in North America, 1995-2011” (5-8), Li Xinfeng, “Historical Research on the Ming Dynasty in Mainland China—1995-2009” (9-17), and Wang Hungtai: “From Benefitting People to the Extravagance of Sensuality: Review and Outlook of Taiwan’s Social Cultural History Study over the Past Two Decades” (18-37.)

The current website of the Society for Ming Studies is at the University of British Columbia, which is rapidly becoming the most active Ming Studies center in North America, with Brook, Shin, Rusk, Alison Bailey and Carla Nappi among others. See <http://mingstudies.arts.ubc.ca/>. It includes a directory of scholars. The website of the James P. Geiss Foundation, which provides financial support for North-American Ming Studies, is at <http://www.geissfoundation.org/>

Qing Historical Studies

Evelyn S. Rawski

Teaching Centers

The field of Qing studies is one of the largest subfields of China studies in North America, its size rivaled only by the field of modern Chinese history. Its origins go back to the first half of the twentieth century, when John King Fairbank (1907–91) returned to begin teaching Chinese history at Harvard University. Fairbank, who obtained a PhD from Oxford University in 1936 with a dissertation on the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs, had studied in China in the early 1930s at Tsinghua University under Tsiang Tingfu. The first full-time Chinese historian employed at Harvard, he produced many PhDs in Qing history and modern Chinese history before he retired in 1977. Other scholars who played major roles in training Qing historians during the 1950s and 1960s included Mary Clabaugh Wright (1917–70) and Ping-ti Ho (1917–2012). Wright, who was in China from 1941 until 1947, obtained her PhD in 1951 (her dissertation was on the Tongzhi reforms), and joined the faculty at Yale University in 1959. Ho, a 1938 graduate of Qinghua University who received a PhD from Columbia University in 1952, taught at the University of British Columbia (1948–62) and the University of Chicago (1963–87).

The second generation of Qing specialists included several Fairbank students: Joseph R. Levenson (1920–69), who taught at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1951 to 1969; Philip Kuhn, who succeeded Fairbank at Harvard; and Albert Feuerwerker, who taught at the University of Michigan from 1959 to 1996. Joseph Levenson's student, Frederic E. Wakeman Jr. (1937–2006), succeeded his mentor at Berkeley and remained there until his retirement in 2006. At Yale University, Jonathan D. Spence (1936–), who obtained his PhD at Yale, succeeded Mary Wright in Qing history. In addition, the University of Chicago, Stanford University, Columbia University, and Princeton University all have Qing specialists on their faculties and produce PhDs in Qing history.

Resources

There are rich and ever-expanding resources for the study of Qing history in North America. The collections of Chinese-language materials held at the Library of Congress, Harvard-Yenching Library, and East Asian libraries at the University of California, Berkeley, the University of Chicago, Columbia, Princeton, and Yale are outstanding. These collections are enhanced by the expanding number of electronic databases of Chinese academic journals, as well as the reprints of archival materials collected and published by the First Historical Archives, Beijing, as well as the National Palace Museum, Taipei. What is especially useful for Qing historical researchers is that these libraries offer ready access to Japanese-, Korean-, and Western-language materials that relate directly to the Chinese primary sources, both in special editions of primary sources and in the secondary literature that is produced in these languages about Qing history.

Research Trends

Several major trends have dominated Qing historical studies in North America over the last two decades. First was the attempt to incorporate Qing history into larger historical frameworks, which challenged the Eurocentric models of history that have dominated the field. The second, somewhat parallel trend was to measure Qing China against other regions that have been incorporated into the “early modern” periodization. Finally, Qing historians have focused on analyzing ethnic factors in the creation and maintenance of the Qing empire, laying the groundwork for tracing the histories of the *shaoshu minzu* in modern Chinese history.

China and Economic Growth

In the 1990s historians of many different non-European societies challenged generalizations based on paradigms and historical assumptions derived from European history. Books by R. Bin Wong, Andre Gunder Frank, and Kenneth Pomeranz all reexamined the Ming-Qing state and economy in broader contexts, in specific reaction to the “capitalist world-system” model posited by Immanuel Wallerstein.¹ Their somewhat different methodologies and approaches raised important issues for future research.

In his book, published in 1997, Wong attempted to counter Europocentric historiography by carefully comparing aspects of Chinese and European history and summarizing each history from the perspective of the other.² This is difficult to do but essential to escape tautological analysis. As Victor Lieberman has pointed out, comparisons of Asian regions with Europe that ask why the former did not experience a self-induced industrial revolution continue to assume that the European experience is the norm against which all other histories should be measured. A question posed in this way can have only one answer: Europe was unique and unlike the rest of the world.³

Wong’s comparisons of Chinese and European popular protest movements and the political development of the state have a mixed result, but his arguments concerning economic history are convincing. Drawing on the investigations of James Lee and his colleagues, who present evidence showing that Chinese and Europeans both controlled population growth in the eighteenth century, he rejects the notion that premodern China was plagued by high population growth.⁴ The demographic data reveal low marital fertility and widespread adoption: China did not face a Malthusian crisis. Like Europe, China also developed proto-industrialization and a dynamic commercial capitalism, with rural enterprises that were extensive and well developed. The existence in China of the phenomena that European historians have cited as contributing to the British Industrial Revolution suggests that they are necessary but not sufficient stimuli for industrialization.

Wong argues that comparative history—the creation of discrete, detailed comparisons between different countries’ historical experience—is required if one is to create a “more general social theory” that is not Europocentric but genuinely inclusive. The major problem with this stance is the historical evidence that cross-regional flows of commodities and people accelerated after the European voyages of discovery and initiation of trade networks linking Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Close comparison of two national histories that ignores these global flows and their historical significance distorts the historical conditions of earlier times.

Where Wong follows “different historical trajectories” in pursuit of a universal social theory, Andre Gunder Frank begins by assuming the existence of an integrated world economy. *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* insists that “there was a single global world economy with a worldwide division of labor and multilateral trade from 1500 onward.”⁵ Frank builds on Janet Abu-Lughod’s earlier megahistory.⁶ He examines flows of commodities and money metals over long stretches of historical time to argue that until 1800 the center of world history, at least from the economic perspective, was not Europe but Asia. Frank’s exposition rejects the Europocentric “capitalist world-system” of Wallerstein: Wallerstein’s peripheries are the core economic regions in Frank’s analysis.

Frank dismisses assumptions in the historical writings that emphasize the importance of European premodern and early modern economic and financial institutions in producing the Industrial Revolution. European dominance after 1800 resulted instead from recent investments in new productive processes and technologies. Europe rose while India, the Ottoman empire, Southeast Asia, and Qing China simultaneously experienced economic decline (“Kondratieff cycles”), caused in part by their earlier prosperity.

The operations of what Frank calls the “world system” ran from at least the sixteenth century to the present and affected all economies. The economic well-being of a particular region is subject to change over time in the future, just as in the past. Frank takes the decline of Britain’s relative world position from the late nineteenth century into the present as a hint that the period of European hegemony may be drawing to its close. His stance resonates with the position taken by the political scientist Samuel Huntington that the twenty-first century will be one of clashes between civilizational clusters that will be much more equal in strength than heretofore.⁷

The dynamic economic growth of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, and South Korea in recent decades has undoubtedly altered the assumption, prevalent a half century ago, that the period of European world dominance had no foreseeable end. From the hindsight of 2000, some historians see World War II as a benchmark in the decline of European empires. The gradual achievement of modernity by various non-European states and of Chinese societies such as Singapore, Taiwan, and the PRC stimulates a restructuring of historical narratives, as well as a revision of world perspectives. Instead of asking why China did not modernize, for example, one should ask how China’s historical legacy affected the particular forms in which modernization occurred, or compare the different developmental paths taken by countries.

This question leads to another aspect of Frank’s work. Frank aggressively contests widely accepted generalizations concerning cause-and-effect relationships in paradigms of the origins of capitalism, science, technology, and European hegemony.⁸ Whereas Wong accepts the notion that Europe had its own distinctive historical trajectory, Frank rejects the idea of distinctive trajectories entirely. Ongoing economic exchanges tied the economic well-being of Europe and Asia together in a fundamental way. Part of one world system, regions continually interacted and communicated with one another. Just as goods flowed across regions, so did technologies and ideas. Frank’s insistence on an integrated world system shifts the ground for historical analysis. If Asia operated within the same system as Europe, that is, under the same economic rules, then the major point of difference between the two lies not so much in historical causes as in the culturally conditioned responses of regions to a specific situation.

The most recent addition to this literature is Kenneth Pomeranz's *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World*. Like Bin Wong, Pomeranz compares what he calls "core" regions, that is, regions with high population densities, commercial capitalism, and proto-industry existing at a given time around the world. He argues that before 1750 the most densely populated regions in Japan and China were comparable to the most densely populated regions in Europe. Japan's Kinai region, China's Lower Yangzi, Britain, and the Netherlands should be the units of comparison, not "Europe" and "Asia." As his statistical appendixes show, however, the poverty of the data forces Pomeranz to include comparisons between regions that are not part of the "core." Attempts to quantify important features of premodern economic activity are a vital part of the analysis, but inherently problematic. Pomeranz's argument, that the East Asian and European core regions had an equal potential for industrialization circa 1750, is provocative but flawed by the poor quality of the data.

Pomeranz's conceptual framework, however, deserves attention. Like Frank, Pomeranz rejects European historical arguments that explain the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century British Industrial Revolution as the product of proto-industry, commercial capitalism, and other European developments of the sixteenth century onward. In the early eighteenth century, Britain, like other "core" regions, faced constraints on the transformation of its economy in the form of finite and dwindling energy sources and population pressure on resources. These constraints were removed after 1750 as Britain used cheap food and textile imports from the Americas to help substitute for domestic inputs and invest in coal mines and thence into the technology that was the basis of the Industrial Revolution. It was thus the exploitation of the New World, combined with "favorable global conjunctures," that stimulated Britain's unique breakthrough. This breakthrough, in part, resulted from conditions dependent on the working of the global trade networks; for example, Pomeranz argues that the massive shipments of New World silver would have caused a major downturn in the silver price had China "not had such a dynamic economy that changing its metallic base could absorb the staggering quantities of silver mined in the New World over three centuries."⁹

China and the Early Modern Period

The literature that attempts to compare China to Western European countries in the early modern period, circa 1500–1800, arises out of similar impulses. Victor Lieberman attempted to integrate Southeast Asia and Japan into the "early modern" historiography by asking why these regions, with minimal mutual contact but exposed to maritime trade influences linking them to Europe, all exhibited trends toward territorial consolidation, administrative centralization, and cultural integration between 1450 and 1830. According to Lieberman, these "loosely coordinated linear and cyclical patterns" illustrate "the thesis of Eurasian interdependence."¹⁰

Lieberman included Japan but not China in the "rimlands" of Eurasia. Neither country, according to a recent work by Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen, is part of Eurasia. Using criteria that include frequency of historical economic and cultural contact, the authors argue in favor of replacing continents with regions as units of scholarly discourse; Eurasia in their view includes South Asia and Southeast Asia but not East Asia.¹¹ Lieberman, looking for parallel sociopolitical trends, excludes China because the China of 1550–1850 "lacked the fundamentally innovative character that we find in most of our fifteenth-sixteenth century case studies."¹²

Lieberman's evaluation is at odds with recent scholarship.¹³ The early Qing was a period of dynamic economic and social change in China, featuring administrative centralization, territorial consolidation, and cultural integration as significant historical trends during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁴ Articles comparing Qing policies of rule to those implemented in the early modern empire created by Britain also contradict the notion that Qing borrowings from the Jesuits were "superficial." Instead, they stress the readiness of Manchu emperors from Kangxi onward to adopt cartographic techniques and other information technologies from Europe in order to expand their administrative powers.¹⁵ Several scholars, writing in a special issue of *International History Review*, have likened the Qing policies to those of the Europeans to conclude that the Qing were also "imperialists."¹⁶ Other research places the campaigns against the Zunghars that began under the Kangxi emperor and were concluded by the Qianlong emperor into a long-term process of absorption of the nomads by the sedentary empires of Russia and the Qing.¹⁷ In comparative terms, these works lay the foundation for the claim that the Qing adopted technologies of rule from Europe and synthesized their own version of an early modern state.¹⁸ This interpretation casts the 1793 meeting between Britain's Lord Macartney and the Qianlong emperor in a different light, as the face-to-face encounter of two "world-ordering" empires, one that failed because neither was willing to be subsumed by the other.¹⁹

During the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Qing emperors were extraordinarily attentive to state affairs. Case studies of a 1768 sorcery scare and the *Siku quanshu* project demonstrate that the imperial scrutiny exercised by the Qianlong emperor was detailed, intense, and comprehensive.²⁰ New studies based on archival materials in the First Historical Archives, Beijing, have contradicted traditional stereotypes to argue that Chinese regularly applied to the courts for redress in civil disputes: "Chinese men and women, including peasants, turned to that system to assert legally protected rights over property, debt, marriage, and inheritance."²¹ The early Qing efforts to standardize the implementation of the legal system reveal the enormous diversity of social and sexual practices that the law tried to eliminate, as well as the active use of the law by women and men intent on obtaining their proper due.²²

Analyses of one of the frequently cited factors in Qing decline, overpopulation, provides a complex picture of the dynamics of China's demographic history that challenges previous generalizations. In a series of works, most recently a monograph summarizing studies of household registers from Northeast China, James Z. Lee and his collaborator, Wang Feng, overturn the received wisdom concerning Chinese demographic trends.²³ Lee and Feng assert that polygyny—the custom by which well-to-do men had more than one childbearing wife or concubine—combined with the practice of female infanticide to ensure that 10 to 20 percent of Chinese men were unable to marry. Marital fertility was lower in China than in Europe during the same period, and polygyny actually reduced the number of children who might otherwise have been born.

Lee and Wang do not accept the thesis that uncontrolled population growth led to a crisis at the end of the Qianlong reign. They argue that the economy kept pace with demographic growth until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, citing Pomeranz's work on the core economic region, the Lower Yangtze, where per capita consumption rivaled levels achieved in Europe in the eighteenth century. Their study challenges the conclusion that population growth was a major cause of the crises of the early nineteenth century.

A similar challenge to the “blame” side of the historiographic tradition has emerged in studies of the White Lotus Rebellion, cited by many as marking the beginning of Qing decline. Generalizations that cite population pressure as the cause of political unrest should focus on the economic regions where population density, commercial activity, and landlordism are greatest, but the White Lotus Rebellion instead emerged in a frontier zone, not the densely populated core region.²⁴ Lee and Wang observe that the periphery is where nutritional levels declined, despite the relatively favorable man-land ratios found there. Frontiers are by definition sites where the arm of government is weaker, so to the extent that civil disorder in frontier regions was the cause of Qing decline, a rather different dynamic to the oft-cited overpopulation thesis is suggested. Indeed, James Millward has argued for putting events such as the White Lotus Rebellion into the context of frontier studies in order to highlight commonalities in the process of frontier settlement that constitute the “political economy of Qing frontier zones.”²⁵

Ethnicity and Qing History

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Qing not only conquered the Ming but, for the first time since the Mongols, successfully incorporated Inner Asian regions into a vast empire ruled from an East Asian capital. At its peak, the Qing empire was significantly larger than today's PRC. Nor was Qing rule simply a repetition of the dynastic cycle. The Qing ruled over a multiethnic empire with an ideology of universal monarchy that differed from Confucian ideology.²⁶ Its ability to bureaucratize tribal sociopolitical structures in Mongolia, Zungharia, and the Tarim Basin and to subordinate local elites to Qing hegemony was based on a creative synthesis of Chinese and non-Han conquest practices.²⁷ Without Qing cultural and administrative integration of these peripheries, the PRC today would not include Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet.²⁸

Pamela K. Crossley stimulated renewed interest in early Manchu history through a series of seminal articles from 1983 onward, which explored the institutionalization of the Qing foundation myth during the eighteenth century,²⁹ and traced the historical evolution of the Hanjun (Chinese-Martial) banners.³⁰ In 1990 she published *Orphan Warriors*, a study of three generations of Suwan Gūwalgiya in the Hangzhou and Chapu garrisons during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which reinterpreted earlier generalizations concerning Manchu-Han relations and Manchu identity in the late Qing.³¹

Orphan Warriors refuted the thesis, put forward by Mary Wright and accepted by many modern Chinese historians, that by the second half of the nineteenth century (the period of the Tongzhi Restoration), the Manchus were sinicized and had “melded into the general populace.”³² They became “virtually indistinguishable” from the (Han) Chinese and united with Chinese officials to press for the achievement of the Restoration's goals. Crossley argued that the reverse was true: bannermen, who had hitherto never really constituted an ethnic group, developed ethnic consciousness for the first time in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Manchu ethnicity was the product of banner life in provincial garrisons, where most Manchus lived in isolation from the Chinese population. On this both Crossley and Mark Elliott, who has published an institutional history of the Eight Banner system, agree.³³ Like Crossley, Elliott rejects the sinicization thesis, but unlike Crossley, who emphasizes the historicity and late emergence of ethnicity,

Elliott stresses ethnic consciousness as a persistent influence on policy throughout the dynastic period. For Elliott, the banner units were key to a “performative Manchu way,”³⁴ which preserved the separate identity of the conquering elite through several centuries, even after many had lost the ability to speak their mother tongue.

Edward J. M. Rhoads’s study of the Qing court in its last decade provides detailed documentation supporting Crossley’s contention concerning the persistence of a Manchu consciousness at the end of the dynasty.³⁵ Rhoads scrutinizes the efforts by Empress Dowager Cixi and her successor, Regent Zaifeng, to not only reverse the post-1861 trend toward decentralization of government authority but to “reimperialize” decision-making processes. Both Cixi and Zaifeng appointed imperial princes to high decision-making posts, reviving the practice of the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong emperors, who used imperial princes and inner court agencies that bypassed the bureaucratic channels of the outer court and thus the Han Chinese bureaucracy.³⁶ The many political appeals during the last decade of Manchu rule to eliminate the differences between Manchus and Han are direct proof that the two groups had not become indistinguishable. Rhoads’s detailed discussion of anti-Manchu writings underlines this theme in the revolutionary ideology underlying the 1911 Revolution and provides the context for the massacres of Manchus following the Wuhan uprising of October 10, 1911.

What difference does acceptance of the Manchu origins of the Qing make to our understanding of Qing history, and of the Qianlong emperor? First, as is clear in the preceding section, it opens up a lively debate on ethnicity that is directly linked to contemporary political concerns with ethnic nationalism. Second, as will be clear in the following sections, it departs from assumptions that the dynastic model is the proper framework in which to analyze the significance of Qing rule and argues that the Qing significantly altered the ideology and culture of rulership and in so doing laid the political foundations for the events of the twentieth century.³⁷

Cultural integration during the Qing period has been studied by many scholars.³⁸ The new scholarship emerging in the 1990s continues to uncover an amazing diversity of regional cultures and documents the ways in which gender, education, and social status affected an individual’s interpretation of events and issues. Work on non-Han groups ranging from Southwest China to the Inner Asian peripheries has challenged the view that one can generalize about attitudes and values from Chinese-language texts alone,³⁹ yet few are prepared to conclude that there was not a “Chinese model.” Indeed, works such as Zvi Ben-Dor Benite’s *The Dao of Muhammad* argue that it was possible for a scholar living in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to be both Muslim and engaged with the Confucian classics.⁴⁰ While investigating the multiplicity of cultures that existed during the Qing, scholars have focused on the ways in which cultural ideals and normative behaviors were disseminated and negotiated through education, rituals, books, drama, and local elites.⁴¹ Some have offered new cultural interpretations of the process of accommodation that enabled Han Chinese literati to accept Qing rule.⁴²

Book Printing and Book Culture

Recent research on publishing and “book culture” in China during the Ming and Qing dynasties advances the argument that writing and books penetrated more deeply into various strata of China than in any other country before 1800.⁴³ Using poetry collections and similar literary sources, scholars have created studies of the special world of Qing elite women.⁴⁴ Chia’s and Brokaw’s work builds a

foundation for discussing the penetration of cultural values and norms through different regions and different social strata in the society. Chia systematically examined imprints from several major publishing centers for the Song, Yuan, and Ming periods and presented quantitative analyses of the quantity, type, and nature of books produced from her databases. Cynthia Brokaw broke new ground by studying commercial book publishing for nonelite readers during the Qing dynasty in several villages in western Fujian. Surviving business records, wood blocks, and imprints permit Brokaw to analyze the trade routes, business organization, and types of books published for the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Her monograph should inspire others to look for similar firms in other regions of China and may eventually permit scholars to understand more precisely how villagers obtained books.⁴⁵ At the other end of the social hierarchy, Kai-wing Chow's analysis of the impact of commercial printing on examination essays and hence on Confucian discourse argues for viewing the connections between the expansion of markets and book culture holistically.⁴⁶ A similar conclusion can be drawn from Julia K. Murray's study of how illustrated books expounding Confucian morality and statecraft that were produced for imperial princes from Song to Ming times were transformed in the Qing and printed for mass audiences.⁴⁷

Qing ruling ideology was not a mere replication of Chinese paradigms. Previous generalizations about the Confucian commitment of the Qianlong emperor and the other Qing rulers are not incorrect but rather incomplete as a statement of their complete philosophical and political stances.⁴⁸ In *A Translucent Mirror*, Crossley outlines the creation of a distinctive Manchu ideology of rule from its origins in the late sixteenth century to its fruition in the Qianlong reign. She focuses on the anti-Manchu case of Zeng Jing to contrast the stances of Yinzhen and his son. Despite his patronage of Confucianism in policies applying to Han subjects, Hongli rejected the fundamental premises underlying Confucian rulership. Whereas his father, the Yongzheng emperor, had argued that the Qing deserved the Mandate of Heaven because they had been culturally and morally transformed (a Confucian theme), Hongli took the position that "The Qing were fit to rule China because Heaven had backed the struggles of Nurhaci and Hongtaiji against the Ming," that is, that the Jurchen/Manchu success was proof of Heaven's favor.⁴⁹

The ideology that sustained the empire was not Confucian universalism "but the narrative, ethical, and ideological self-containment of early modern emperorship" constructed by Hongli over the course of his reign.⁵⁰ The diverse peoples of the empire were held together by the emperor himself: "[B]ecause the emperor's consciousness was an extension of the mind of Heaven, he maintained this connection through an encyclopedic collection of rituals, and he reified Heaven's will in the magnificence of his regime."⁵¹ Recent studies of the Qianlong emperor's southern tours and the performance of rainmaking rituals by local officials follow this theme in examining how these activities connected the emperor and the Confucian ritual order to the ordinary man in the street.⁵² At the same time, Susan Naquin's detailed study of Peking's temples is based on the opposite perspective, showing how the Qing capital was socially constructed by the communities that coalesced around these religious centers.⁵³

The Qianlong emperor brought a new, non-Confucian ideology of universal rulership to its full development. By the time of his reign, the institutional arrangements and social institutions of the Manchu rulers also varied significantly from the Ming pattern. In a 1998 monograph I outlined the non-Han organization of the Qing conquest elite and imperial lineage and linked its choice of multiple

capitals, its pursuit of marital endogamy, and its compartmentalized ritual schedule to a deliberate adoption of the multicultural orientation of its predecessor conquest regimes, the Liao, Jin, and Yuan.⁵⁴

The Manchu rulers synthesized Han Chinese and Inner Asian political systems to create a distinctively new kind of ruling structure. Compartmentalization of policies affecting different groups of subjects was paralleled by an administrative division of the empire into the former Ming territories, where the majority of Han Chinese lived, and the newly acquired Inner and Central Asian periphery. Ming bureaucratic structures and Han Chinese officials dominated the governmental framework of the “inner” or Ming regions, while bannermen, mostly Manchus and Mongols but also native elites, dominated the governance of the “outer” or peripheral regions. The Board of Rites handled tributary relations with Europe, East Asia, and Southeast Asia, but in Hongli’s time the Lifanyuan (Court of Colonial Affairs) handled relations with the Russians, Qalqa Mongols, Tibetans, and Uighurs. Whereas audiences with Han Chinese officials took place primarily in the Forbidden City, the Qing summer capital, Rehe (Chengde), was the site for many of the emperor’s interactions with Mongols, Tibetan prelates, and even Uighur notables.⁵⁵

Emphasizing the multiethnic nature of the Qing empire, several recent books focus on the relations between the Qing state and non-Han peoples in the borderlands.⁵⁶ Cautions about applying twentieth-century ethnic labels to earlier groups appear in David G. Atwill’s study of the anti-Qing movements that threatened imperial order and resulted in the establishment of a rebel regime led by Du Wenxiu, which survived in western Yunnan as an autonomous entity from 1856 to the end of 1872. Atwill argues that the uprising cannot be simply understood as a Muslim-Chinese conflict.⁵⁷ Religion was not the primary identification for Yunnanese Muslims, who did not share a unified identity. The Qing officials used one term, *Yi*, to cover all of the many other non-Han ethnic groups residing in nineteenth-century Yunnan. Led by Muslims, the key to the durability of the rebellion lay in the support that Du and other leaders received from other non-Han, non-Muslim ethnic groups. The contrast between the Yunnan rebellion and Yakub Beg’s rebellion in Xinjiang,⁵⁸ which was supported by virtually all Muslims, can be explained in terms of the continuous contact of Xinjiang Muslims with their coreligionists to the west and the brevity of the region’s incorporation into the Qing state.⁵⁹ These subjects, which cross over into the realm of modern Chinese history, underline the important historical continuities that link pre-1840 Qing history to contemporary issues.

Notes

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¹ Although this essay focuses on recent publications in North America, it does not mean to suggest that the scholarly discussions are not international. As one example, Hamashita Takeshi’s “The Tribute Trade System and Modern Asia,” *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 46 (1988): 7–25 is widely cited in the works discussed below. For a condensed presentation of Wallerstein’s views, see Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

² R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

³ Victor Lieberman, “Transcending East-West Dichotomies: State and Culture Formation in Six Ostensibly Disparate Areas,” *Modern Asian Studies* 31.4 (1997): 463–67.

⁴ See James Z. Lee and Wang Feng, *One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

⁵ Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 52.

⁶ Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, 1250–1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

⁷ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

⁸ On the meeting of Chinese and Western science during the Qing, see Benjamin A. Elman, *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550–1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005); and Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Sextants of Beijing: Global Currents in Chinese History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999).

⁹ Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 273.

¹⁰ Lieberman, “Transcending East-West Dichotomies,” 469, 534.

¹¹ Martin W. Lewis and Karen Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

¹² Lieberman, “Transcending East-West Dichotomies,” 539–40.

¹³ For a summary of the scholarship of the 1980s, see Evelyn S. Rawski, “Research Themes in Ming-Qing Socioeconomic History: The State of the Field,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 50.1 (1991): 84–111.

¹⁴ For a discussion of this theme, see Evelyn S. Rawski, “The Qing Formation and the Early-Modern Period,” and Jack A. Goldstone, “Neither Late Imperial nor Early Modern: Efflorescences and the Qing Formation in World History,” both in *The Qing Formation in World-Historical Time*, ed. Lynn A. Struve (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), 207–41, 242–302. On an important exercise of state power, famine relief, see Lillian M. Li, *Fighting Famine in North China: State, Market, and Environmental Decline, 1690s–1990s* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

¹⁵ Peter Perdue, “Boundaries, Maps, and Movement: Chinese, Russian, and Mongolian Empires in Early Modern Eurasia,” *International History Review* 20.2 (1998): 263–86. See also Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

¹⁶ See *International History Review* 20.2 (1998). This theme is the focus of Peter C. Perdue’s *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2005). Recent works on military history include Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military under the Qing Dynasty* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); and Nicola Di Cosmo, ed., *Military Culture in Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

¹⁷ Fred W. Bergholz, *The Partition of the Steppe: The Struggle of the Russians, Manchus, and the Zunghar Mongols for Empire in Central Asia, 1619–1758: A Study in Power Politics* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993); Michael Khordarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600–1771* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

¹⁸ Rawski, “The Qing Formation and the Early Modern Period.”

¹⁹ James L. Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995).

²⁰ Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990); R. Kent Guy, *The Emperor’s Four Treasuries: Scholars and the State in the Late Ch’ien-lung Era* (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987).

²¹ Kathryn Bernhardt and Philip C. C. Huang, eds., *Civil Law in Qing and Republican China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). See also Philip C. C. Huang, *Civil Justice in China: Representation and Practice in the Qing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), which uses 628 Qing civil cases from three different regions.

²² See Melissa A. Macauley, *Social Power and Legal Culture: Litigation Masters in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Matthew H. Sommer, *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); and Janet M. Theiss, *Disgraceful Matters: The Politics of Chastity in Eighteenth-Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

²³ James Z. Lee and Wang Feng, *One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities, 1700–2000* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999). See also the exchange concerning Lee and Wang’s work in *Journal of Asian Studies* 61.2 (2002): 524–31, 591–607.

- ²⁴ On the role played by prominent families in the maintenance of local order, see the essays in *Chinese Local Elites and Patterns of Dominance*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick and Mary B. Rankin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). See also William T. Rowe, *Crimson Rain: Seven Centuries of Violence in a Chinese County* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).
- ²⁵ James A. Millward, "New Perspectives on the Qing Frontier," in *Remapping China: Fissures in Historical Terrain*, ed. Gail Hershatter, Emily Honig, Jonathan N. Lipman, and Randall Stross (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 125.
- ²⁶ Pamela K. Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
- ²⁷ William T. Rowe, *Saving the World: Chen Hongmou and Elite Consciousness in Eighteenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
- ²⁸ Evelyn S. Rawski, "Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History," *Journal of Asian Studies* 55.4 (1996): 829–50; *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
- ²⁹ Pamela K. Crossley, "An Introduction to the Qing Foundation Myth," *Late Imperial China* 6.2 (1985): 13–24; "Manzhou yuanliu kao and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46.4 (1987): 761–90. Later Crossley published *The Manchus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), which covered their history from the ancestral Jurchen down to the twentieth century.
- ³⁰ Pamela K. Crossley, "The Tong in Two Worlds: Cultural Identities in Liaodong and Nurgan during the 13th–17th Centuries," *Ch'ing-shih wen-t'i* 4.9 (1983): 21–46; "The Qianlong Retrospect on the Chinese-Martial (Hanjun) Banners," *Late Imperial China* 10.1 (1989): 63–107. See also her "Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China," *Late Imperial China* 10.1 (1990): 1–34.
- ³¹ Pamela K. Crossley, *Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Ch'ing World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
- ³² *Ibid.*, 224. On the original model, see Mary Clabaugh Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957).
- ³³ Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 348.
- ³⁵ Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Ch'ing and Early Republican China, 1861–1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000).
- ³⁶ On the inner court and Manchu governance, see Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch'ing China, 1723–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
- ³⁷ R. Kent Guy, "Who Were the Manchus? A Review Essay," *Journal of Asian Studies* 61.1 (2002): 151–64; Sudipta Sen, "The New Frontiers of Manchu China and the Historiography of Asian Empires: A Review Essay," *Journal of Asian Studies* 61.1 (2002): 165–77.

³⁸ See David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); and James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988). Both volumes explicitly address issues of unity and diversity in Chinese culture.

³⁹ Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); Stevan Harrell, ed., *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995); Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton, eds., *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

See also Pamela K. Crossley, "Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China," *Late Imperial China* 11.1 (1990): 1–35, an article that has exerted considerable influence on recent writings.

⁴⁰ Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005).

⁴¹ See the essays in Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Kwang-ching Liu, ed., *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); and Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

⁴² Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics, and Lineage Discourse* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).

⁴³ See the articles by Lucille Chia, Cynthia Brokaw, and Kai-wing Chow in a special issue of *Imperial China* 17.1 (1996); the essays in Cynthia J. Brokaw and Kai-wing Chow, eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); and Cynthia J. Brokaw, *Commerce in Culture: The Sibao Book Trade in the Qing and Republican Periods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007). Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries)* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), focuses on Ming imprints but provides a valuable baseline from which to compare Qing book production.

⁴⁴ See Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); and Susan Mann, *The Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

⁴⁵ Brokaw, *Commerce in Culture*.

⁴⁶ Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

⁴⁷ Julia K. Murray, *Mirror of Morality: Chinese Narrative Illustration and Confucian Ideology* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007).

⁴⁸ For the Qianlong emperor's Tibetan Buddhist activities, see Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).

⁴⁹ Pamela K. Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Ch'ing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 260. See Jonathan D. Spence, *Treason by the Book* (New York: Viking, 2001), for a new study of the Zeng Jing case, which prompted the Yongzheng emperor's compilation *Da-yi juemi lu*, in which the statement in the text was embedded.

⁵⁰ Crossley, *Translucent Mirror*, 361.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Brian R. Dott, *Identity Reflections: Pilgrimages to Mount Tai in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004); Michael G. Chang, *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring and the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680–1785* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007); Jeffrey Snyder-Reinke, *Dry Spells: State Rainmaking and Local Governance in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

⁵³ Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); see also the essays in Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü, eds., *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

⁵⁴ Evelyn S. Rawski, *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

⁵⁵ Ning Chia, “The Lifanyuan and the Inner Asian Rituals in the Early Qing (1644–1795),” *Late Imperial China* 14.1 (1993): 60–92. For a provocative analysis of the Mongol response to Qing imperial patronage of Gelugpa Buddhism, see Johan Elverskog, *Our Great Qing: The Mongols, Buddhism, and the State in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).

⁵⁶ See the collection of essays in Diana Lary, ed., *The Chinese State at the Borders* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007); and Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F. Siu, and Donald S. Sutton, eds., *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). Also see C. Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); and John E. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist: China's Colonization of Guizhou, 1200–1700* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007).

⁵⁷ David G. Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856–1873* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

⁵⁸ Ho-dong Kim, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–77* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

⁵⁹ For a long-term history of Xinjiang, see James A. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

The Field of Qing Legal History

Matthew H. Sommer

The field of Qing legal history in the United States can be divided into three generations, each characterized by the use of distinct genres of primary sources and informed by its own priorities and frame of analysis.¹ For each generation, I shall introduce exemplary scholars; a major focus will be how perspectives have changed over time, in response to the opening of Chinese archives in the post-Mao era. A basic question that remains unresolved is what standards, concepts, and vocabulary are most appropriate for the study of Qing law. To what extent should we measure the Chinese legal tradition against that of the West?

The first generation of scholars published in the 1950s and 1960s, coinciding with the establishment of the broader modern field of East Asian studies in the United States. Their work is informed by an assumption that the traditional institutions of China had failed; they assumed that a Weberian ideal type of “the modern West” was the standard by which Chinese inadequacy should be measured. In contrast to the dynamic, progressive West, Qing law had lacked separation of powers, due process, respect for individual rights, and civil law; instead, it had been chiefly a tool of autocratic control, penal in character, which was wielded to intimidate the populace.

Members of the second generation (of the 1970s and 1980s) reacted indignantly against the more extreme manifestations of this paradigm. Their strategy was to enumerate the idealized features of the modern Western model, and to attempt to find the same features in the Qing legal system. This strategy implied that to refute the claim of Chinese inferiority it was necessary to show that China was *the same* as the West. In other words, for both the first and second generations, the frame of reference was stubbornly Western, and the question was how well China measured up to that ideal. As simplistic as this approach may seem, in some respects the second generation represented a marked advance over the first. For example, second-generation scholars wanted to know how Qing law actually worked, rather than what was supposedly wrong with it, and one of their number, David Buxbaum, took the pathbreaking step of arguing that “civil law” did in fact exist in the Qing, supporting that claim with actual legal case records.

The distinctive feature of the third generation of scholarship (which continues to the present) is in-depth research with large numbers of original legal cases from Chinese archives, which became possible only with the normalization of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Washington. The opening of Qing legal archives effected a radical shift in perspective: from the top-down perspective of the imperial center to the grassroots perspective of local courts and society, from legal principles and theory to how the law worked in practice, and from what Qing law supposedly lacked to the purposes it actually served. The archives made it possible to explore the friction between ideology and

practice *within* the formal legal system but also the field of customary practice that flourished *outside* that system, sometimes in conflict with it.

There are two key figures in this story with whom Chinese readers may be familiar: Qu Tongzu (English: T'ung-tsu Ch'ü) and Philip C. C. Huang, who exemplify the best of the first and third generations of scholarship, respectively. Their biographies exemplify the transnational cross-fertilization that has increasingly characterized the American field of Chinese studies. Both men were born in China. On completing his education, Qu spent twenty years at North American universities, after which he returned to China and spent the rest of his career at the Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.² As a youth Huang immigrated to the United States, where he matured and received his education and later founded the Center for Chinese Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. Beginning in 1979, Huang visited China many times for research, playing a key role in introducing Qing legal archives to a Western scholarly audience, and he brought several senior Chinese legal historians to UCLA as visiting scholars; moreover, since retiring from UCLA, Huang has begun a second teaching career in Beijing. Both men's works are available in both English and Chinese.

Beginning with the third generation, all scholarship in this field has relied on in-depth archival research in China. This research typically requires individual scholars to visit China repeatedly, often for up to a year at a time. In the process, Americans meet and exchange ideas with Chinese scholars. Many have published in Chinese, as well as in English, and have also presented their findings at conferences in China. This field has never been exclusively "American," and its transnational dimension has become increasingly vital over time.

Qu Tongzu and the Weberian Paradigm

We begin with Qu Tongzu's classic, *Law and Society in Traditional China*, which remains required reading for anyone working in this field today.³ The broad theme of this book is the question of what was *wrong* with "traditional" Chinese institutions, such that they "failed" to foster capitalism and modernization along Western lines. In this discourse, which measures China against an ideal type of "the modern West," China's failure is simply taken for granted: the purpose of historical inquiry is to illuminate the inadequacies that predestined its failure. This approach derives from Max Weber, who tested his theory about the rise of capitalism through a comparative analysis of two other civilizations where capitalism had *not* developed, namely, China and India. Unlike Europe, Weber argued, Chinese society was dominated by kinship (in India the problem was caste), which discouraged the development of individual rights, free contract, and the concept of the corporate person; domination by kinship inhibited the development of law, which Weber defined as formal rules enforced by autonomous authorities. The Chinese "patrimonial state" suppressed the development of autonomous corporations that might have threatened it politically, thereby further inhibiting the development of modern law. Moreover, China's Confucian elites lacked the autonomy of European elites, and China entirely lacked the autonomous "free" cities in which the bourgeoisie had gestated.⁴ It is important to remember that Weber was interested in China and India less for their own sake than for their utility as counterfactual tests of his theories about the development of modernity in Europe; moreover, his understanding of non-European societies depended on the work available in European languages in his day—much

of which was authored by imperialist diplomats, soldiers, and missionaries—and it was limited and distorted accordingly.

One can hardly overstate the impact of the Weberian paradigm on scholars of Qing legal history. (Even Philip Huang, founder of the third generation of archives-based scholarship, devotes an entire chapter of his 1996 book to Weber.) Qu Tongzu rarely cites Weber, and of course his focus is China rather than Europe, but in both *Law and Society in Traditional China* and his other key book, *Local Government in China under the Ch'ing*, a Weberian ideal type of “the modern West” always lurks in the background.

The thesis of *Law and Society* is that “traditional” law was a highly stable synthesis of legalist (法家) structure and Confucian (儒家) values: in effect, a legalist system was geared toward enforcing a Confucian vision of moral social order. After the “Confucianization (儒家化) of the law” during the early empire, “no significant change occurred until the early twentieth century when the Chinese government began to revise and modernize its law” (285). For more than a thousand years, “there were no fundamental changes until the promulgation of the modern law. We find stability and continuity in law and society, both dominated by the Confucian values” (1965: 289).

The key priority of this “Confucianized” (儒家化) law was to uphold “particularistic” hierarchies within the family (defined by generation, age, sex, and degree of kinship), as well as between legally defined “social classes” (階級) in society: officials (官吏), commoners (平民), and people of mean or debased status (賤民).

Primary importance was given to particularism. . . . As a result, the law was primarily concerned with status-relationship and the corresponding obligations, paying little attention to such matters as individual rights, which were incompatible with particularism. Specifically, it was particularism which prevented the development of a universal law and abstract legal principles. The emphasis on particularism shaped the characteristics of Chinese law; it also set a limit on the development in Chinese law. (1965: 284)

It was this invidious “particularism” that prevented progress along Weberian lines.

Qu closes with a brief but revealing discussion of how the “modernization” of Chinese law at the end of the Qing failed. Reactionary officials like Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 stubbornly resisted modernization, despite the urgent need for reform; they succeeded in preventing the full elimination of particularism from the legal order, so that “the force of tradition remained very strong for decades after the revision” (1965: 287). Modernization was superficial and ineffective. Given the hostility toward “Red China” in the United States during Qu’s time there, it might have been unwise for him to draw out this argument too explicitly. But the unmistakable implication is that far more fundamental change was needed to overcome the inertia of tradition: a revolution in culture that would target the Confucian “familism” that had underpinned the particularism of traditional law—and, perhaps, a social revolution that would target the reactionary elites who had defended tradition at the expense of the nation’s future.

Bodde and Morris's *Law in Imperial China*

After Qu Tongzu's work, the most important study produced by the first generation is *Law in Imperial China: Exemplified by 190 Ch'ing Dynasty Cases*, published in 1967 by two professors at the University of Pennsylvania, Derk Bodde (1909–2003) and Clarence Morris (1903–85). Their book builds on and closely complements the work of Qu Tongzu. Derk Bodde was a prominent sinologist who taught in what was then the Department of Oriental Studies; Clarence Morris was a professor in the law school who added a lawyer's perspective to the project. Together they taught a seminar on law in imperial China, and they published their 1967 classic based on materials developed for their seminar.⁵

Law in Imperial China represented a major advance in a number of ways. First, it concentrates squarely on the Qing dynasty (whereas Qu Tongzu tends to jump back and forth between eras to reinforce the image of timeless stagnation); it provides a wealth of detail about the Qing system and how it was supposed to function (including the Qing code, the penal system, judicial review, and so on). Second, it provides translations of 190 brief summaries of actual legal cases selected from the nineteenth-century casebook *Xing'an huilan* (《刑案匯覽》, Conspectus of Penal Cases). Third, it uses these case summaries to investigate how Qing law worked in practice, and also to shed light on social conditions on the eve of the Opium War. These summaries provided an unparalleled glimpse of Qing legal practice in an era when Chinese legal archives were not yet open to Americans.

It is hard to discern a specific thesis in Bodde and Morris, but one effect of their detailed description of judicial machinery is to highlight its sheer sophistication, especially in its legalist dimension of central control: matching each offense to the appropriate statute, so that the punishment fits the crime exactly; scrutinizing the performance of lower officials to deter malfeasance; and so on.

In general the first generation adopted this top-down perspective, treating law mainly as an instrument of domination. It assumed that the legal system was essentially penal, that minor matters involving no serious crime were referred to lineage and community elders for mediation rather than being judged in court, that every court case ended with corporal punishment, and that ordinary people thus feared any involvement with the law. As Clarence Morris writes in *Law in Imperial China*, “[A]ny entanglement with the Chinese imperial penal system was a personal disaster. . . . It tended to terrify the public into good behavior, rather than to redress disharmony” (1967: 542).⁶

As this passage suggests, Bodde and Morris share Qu Tongzu's bias against “tradition.” Bodde makes the following comment about the case summaries: “It is hoped that a reading of the cases, despite the gap of more than a century between them and the present day, will help make clear why the Chinese monarchy had to give way to a republic in 1911, and why the republic in turn had to be torn by further revolution” (1967: 160). He follows with a discussion of the crushing oppression of the individual by the hierarchical family system in “Confucian China,” which he contrasts with the modern West. “Confucianism has long been officially dead in China, but the social and political patterns here summarized have never ceased to influence the painful process of change during the past half century” (1967: 199).

Here Bodde reveals his sympathy for the May Fourth critique of Chinese tradition (especially the Confucian family system) and for the Chinese revolution as a whole, which had consumed “the past half century” to which he alludes. Bodde had lived in Shanghai as a boy, and he later spent six

years studying in China during the 1930s; in 1948–49 he was back in Beijing (as the first recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship to China), where he witnessed the decadence of the Guomindang's last days, followed by the triumphant entry of the People's Liberation Army (of which he wrote a sympathetic account entitled *Peking Diary: A Year of Revolution*). After returning to the United States, Bodde became a target of "red baiting," but his career was protected by the University of Pennsylvania's tradition of academic freedom (Rickett 2003).

Clearly, Bodde's personal experiences and political views helped shape an interpretation of the Qing congruent with that of Qu Tongzu. The failures of China's traditional institutions—especially the inertia of familial particularism—had made revolution both necessary and inevitable.

The Limits of the Weberian Paradigm and the Second Generation's Reaction

It is hard to argue with Qu Tongzu's premise that legal modernization along Western lines did not spontaneously occur during the Qing. The problem with Qu's analysis, rather, is his assumption that such modernization constitutes the only kind of change that matters. This assumption induces him to downplay or simply ignore any other kind of change. In other words, while the Weberian paradigm may help to illuminate what did *not* happen, it tends to obscure what actually *did* happen.⁷

The Weberian paradigm was second nature to the first generation of scholars. Its power derived from its forceful posing of questions that people convinced of China's failure wanted very badly to answer. For Chinese nationalists, the question was why China had failed to resist foreign aggression more effectively, and for those sympathetic to the revolution (in China and elsewhere), the priority was to show why revolution had been necessary. For many in the West (and for Chinese anticommunists as well), the question was why liberal politics had failed, so that China ended up "going communist." China's failure was often contrasted with Japan's success at becoming an industrial, military power and at avoiding a communist fate.

It is hard to reject entirely the argument of failure—after all, the Qing dynasty did collapse, along with the imperial system as a whole. On the other hand, from the vantage point of the present, it makes little sense to see "China" as a failure, so the paradigm that framed first generation scholarship no longer seems very relevant. But also one might pose the comparative question in a different way. If one compares the Qing dynasty to other ancien régimes that were its contemporaries, such as the Tokugawa shogunate or the Mughal Empire, instead of assuming the modern nation-state ("China," "Japan," or "India") or an ideal type of "the modern West" to be appropriate categories of analysis, then the Qing in fact looks remarkably successful. After all, the Qing dynasty lasted seventy years after the Opium War, despite a relentless series of crises, whereas the Tokugawa fell within fifteen years of the relatively innocuous visit of Matthew Perry's American naval squadron. The Qing dynasty (and the Republic that followed) also successfully resisted outright colonization, in contrast to the Mughal defeat and South Asia's total subjugation by a relative handful of British.

To frame the comparison in these terms is to highlight the Qing dynasty's relative success; the focus of inquiry then becomes the sources of dynastic strength. What was it about the dynasty's fundamental institutions—of which law was certainly one—that gave it such resilience? After all, for most of Chinese history, what appears to a modern scholar like Qu Tongzu as stagnation would have been

valued as stability and continuity. These qualities are all the more impressive when one considers that much of the Qing judicial system (including nearly the entire text of the original Qing code) was borrowed intact from the former Ming. If we take longevity as a measure of success, there are few legal systems in world history that can claim to have been more successful than that of late imperial China.

A second generation of scholars emerged in the nineteen-seventies and eighties to challenge the paradigm of Chinese failure. This was a wider movement in the American field of Chinese history, of which legal history is of course only one part.⁸

For example, urban historian William T. Rowe begins his study of Hankou by describing the Weberian ideal type of the European city, which past scholars had asserted could not be found in China; he then claims to identify in nineteenth-century Hankou all the features of that ideal type, the most important being autonomous urban elites who resembled the modern European bourgeoisie (1984). Rowe's second volume argues that by the late nineteenth century Hankou had developed something close to a "civil society" or "public sphere" along modern European lines (1989). While Rowe is universally respected, these aspects of his work have met with profound skepticism in some quarters (see, e.g., Wakeman 1993). Indeed, the structure of Rowe's argument suggests that in order to argue that China was not *inferior* to the West, it is necessary to claim that China was *exactly the same* as the West. Philip Huang has criticized this logical formula as "the discursive trap of countering an argument with its opposite"; ultimately, this becomes a theory-proving enterprise (in which the conclusion precedes and guides the evidence gathering, instead of the other way around) that risks obscuring more than it reveals (1996: 19).

In the field of legal history, one finds this sort of approach in the work of Harvard Law School professor William Alford—for example, his article on the famous case of Yang Naiwu (楊乃武) and the woman nicknamed Little Cabbage (小白菜), who were prosecuted for adultery and murder but eventually exonerated (Alford 1984). Alford uses this case to challenge scholars who had portrayed the Qing legal system as "essentially an instrument of state control little concerned with individual justice" (1185). He argues that the case "clearly illustrates that the imperial criminal justice process encompassed a broad range of sophisticated procedural and administrative measures designed to convict the guilty and acquit the innocent" (1242). He opines that "at least in this celebrated instance two seemingly incorrect capital sentences were reversed and officials who acted improperly were punished" (1243). It appears that Alford *wants* to argue—although he never quite goes this far—that the Qing system of appeals and review protected the rights of defendants, presuming innocence until guilt was proven (note his questionable assumption that the defendants were in fact innocent). Alford tends to discount the legalist function of the review system in jealously guarding against malfeasance, instead preferring to emphasize its role in exonerating "the innocent." Alford closes with a series of rhetorical questions, which can be summarized as follows: can we modern Americans really be sure that the Qing justice system was inferior to our own? (1248–49).⁹

As this question implies, both the Weberian paradigm and the indignant reaction to it share an idealized West as their frame of reference. All that seems to matter, ultimately, is how the Qing compares to the West—indeed, such approaches may ultimately tell us more about how some scholars fantasize the West than about the Qing itself.

The Turn to Archival Research

The first and second generations depended on published sources that were then available in libraries in North America: legal codes (法典), such as *The Great Qing Code* 《大清律例》 and *Qing huidian shili* 《清會典事例》, and commentaries of senior jurists, such as *Du li cun yi* 《讀例存疑》 by Xue Yunsheng (薛允升); the legal treatises (刑法志) included in dynastic histories; casebooks such as *Conspectus of Penal Cases* 《刑案匯覽》, which were published to serve as reference works for sitting magistrates; and handbooks and memoirs (官箴書) by famous officials, such as *A Complete Book of Happiness and Benevolence* 《福惠全書》 by Huang Liuhong (黃六鴻). These texts remain indispensable sources, but when used in isolation from archival records, they have significant limitations.

The Qing code is mainly concerned with “major cases” (重大案件) that involve serious violence or threats of a political or ideological nature, and it has an overwhelmingly penal emphasis: nearly every statute (律) and substatute (例) states with a high degree of specificity that someone who commits a given crime will receive a given penalty. On that basis, it is not surprising that earlier scholars imagined the courtroom above all as a terrifying scene of punishment. Given their intended purpose as reference works, the casebooks tend to highlight unusual, tricky cases for which there was no exact measure to be found in the code, or that required magistrates to balance competing principles. For this reason, one cannot take their contents as a reflection of how routine cases were handled, or how often different kinds of cases actually occurred. The texts written by famous officials pose a different challenge: a principal purpose of such works was to portray their authors as wise and benevolent “incorruptible officials” (*qing guan* 清官), and they cannot be taken at face value.

The hallmark of the third generation of scholarship on Qing legal history is the use of large numbers of original legal cases to focus on how law worked in practice at the grassroots level, rather than a shared intellectual framework comparable to the old Weberian paradigm. There are two main categories of case records that American scholars have used: routine memorials on criminal matters (刑科題本) submitted by provincial governors to the palace for central review (held at the First Historical Archive 中國第一歷史檔案館 in Beijing and at the Academia Sinica 中央研究院 in Taiwan), and case records from local courts at the district (縣/州/廳) level. The only large collections of local court cases that are known to survive are from Danshui/Xinzhu (淡水廳/新竹縣) in Taiwan (the originals are held at National Taiwan University 國立臺灣大學), Baodi County (寶坻縣) in Hebei (held at the First Historical Archive), and Ba County (巴縣) and Nanbu County (南部縣), both in Sichuan (held at the Sichuan Provincial Archive 四川省檔案館 and the Nanchong Municipal Archive 南充市檔案館, respectively).¹⁰ American scholars have played a leading role in using all of these archives to study Qing legal history. Only recently have a few Chinese scholars begun to use large numbers of actual legal case records from the archives in order to study Qing law,¹¹ and I know of no Japanese scholar who has done so to date, with the sole exception of Karasawa Yasuhiko 唐澤靖彥 (who was trained by Philip Huang at UCLA and therefore can be considered a member of the American field).

This shift to archival research began with David Buxbaum’s seminal 1971 article on “civil cases” from Danshui/Xinzhu (淡水/新竹) in Taiwan, which I discuss below. Other scholars also played a role (e.g., Zelin 1986; and Allee 1994). But Philip Huang deserves the principal credit for opening up Chinese legal archives to American scholarship and for fostering a third generation solidly grounded in archival

research—through his efforts to publicize these resources (1982); his use of them for his own research (1985, 1996, 2001); his training of graduate students at UCLA, many of whom would go on to become major scholars in their own right;¹² and his coeditorship (with his wife and UCLA colleague, Kathryn Bernhardt 白凱) of a book series, *Law, Society, and Culture in China*, for Stanford University Press.¹³

David Buxbaum's Discovery of Qing "Civil Law"

When scholars first began looking at local court archives, it became obvious that some basic assumptions of the first generation were wrong. For example, Qing magistrates in fact adjudicated large numbers of "minor matters related to household, marriage, and land" (戶婚田土細事) as a matter of routine; moreover they did so in a consistent manner that often involved no punishment of any party. Local archives also made it obvious that ordinary people were not afraid to go to court and even humble people could afford to do so. In short, Qing law was not simply a device for terrorizing the population into submission, nor yet simply a system for punishing violent crime. On the contrary, the dynasty's local courts served an important social function by adjudicating mundane disputes that arose in the daily lives of the people. Buxbaum was the first American scholar to make these observations, on the basis of the Danshui/Xinzhu cases, which showed him Qing law "in action at the trial level" (1971: 255). Buxbaum belongs to the second generation of Qing legal scholarship, in that his aim was to refute claims of Chinese inferiority by showing similarity to the West, but he also constitutes a bridge to the third generation, in that he was the first to introduce local case records to American scholarship. The findings of his seminal 1971 article set much of the agenda for Philip Huang's subsequent work on "civil justice."

Buxbaum is operating within the Weberian paradigm, although he seeks to refute its bias against Chinese tradition. After rehearsing Weber's criteria for modern "rational" law, Buxbaum concludes that "many, if indeed not most, of the attributes of modern law can be found in Chinese law of the period under discussion," and he attests to its "rationality" (1971: 273–74). In his view, past scholarship on the Qing "overestimates the significance of criminal law, and underestimates the role of civil law" (255). Indeed, Buxbaum's argument that Qing law was modern and rational depends heavily on his claim that it included a significant measure of civil law.

As Buxbaum is aware, Qing law had no exact equivalent in either discourse or procedure to the criminal/civil distinction that comes from the Western legal tradition. He surmounts this difficulty by equating the Qing category "minor matters of household, marriage and real property" (戶婚田土細事) with "what we would normally term civil law matters" (1971: 261–62). This equation rests on subject matter: "minor matters" involved everyday disputes over family, property, and the like. Buxbaum also argues that the Qing code's section of "Household Statutes" (戶律) should be considered "civil law" because it addresses the same sort of subject matter (even though the individual measures in this section are nearly all penal in nature). But Buxbaum makes a further suggestion that seems to imply a lack of confidence in his own classificatory scheme:

One of the ways in which criminal cases may be differentiated from civil cases at this point in the proceedings is by the nature of the decision. If criminal punishment were forthcoming, then we could, *at least from hindsight*, regard the case as criminal in nature. If, on the other hand, the court decreed

specific performance of a contract, damages, reformation of a deed, and so forth, we *might* assume such cases were civil (1971: 264, emphasis added).

To confuse matters further, Buxbaum also provides examples of what he calls “quasi-civil” and “quasi-criminal” cases (278–79).

Clearly, Buxbaum is imposing a classificatory scheme that did not operate in the minds of Qing magistrates.¹⁴ The key binary distinction in Qing judicial practice distinguished “minor matters” (細事), which involved no significant violence and required no severe punishments, and thus could be handled at the local magistrate’s discretion, from the smaller number of “major cases” (重大案件), which had to be reported up the chain of command and therefore should be adjudicated strictly and explicitly according to the code (Sommer 2009a). Many minor matters involved relatively petty offenses (brawling, false accusation, marriage fraud, wife selling, adultery, and so on), and it was not unusual for magistrates to impose at least some corporal punishments in such cases, although they did not always do so.¹⁵ What distinguished such routine cases was not the absence of crime and punishment but rather their low level of severity. Nevertheless, for Buxbaum a great deal is at stake in claiming that the Qing dynasty had civil law. This claim is necessary to sustain his larger argument that the Qing measured up very well according to the Weberian ideal.

Philip Huang and the Paradoxes of the Qing Civil Justice System

The full potential of legal archives for historical research was demonstrated in Philip Huang’s 1996 *Civil Justice in China: Representation and Practice in the Qing*, which exploited 628 cases from the archives of three county courts to build on Buxbaum’s empirical and conceptual findings.¹⁶ Huang’s text is very rich, and I will address just a few of its contributions and the questions they raise.

Like Buxbaum, Huang equates “minor matters” with “civil cases”; he uses these cases in conjunction with surveys of North China villages conducted by Japanese investigators in the 1930s to analyze what he calls the Qing “civil justice system.” Huang divides this system into three “realms,” which operated according to different principles and procedures. In the “informal” realm of village mediation, disputes were settled by local worthies through compromise. Most disputes never went beyond this level, but if mediation failed, one or another party would likely file a lawsuit at the county *yamen*. In the “formal” realm, magistrates adjudicated these lawsuits according to the Qing code in formal court hearings, usually finding in favor of one of the parties at the expense of the other. In the “third realm,” which lay in between, disputants would file lawsuits while continuing to negotiate but usually would settle out of court on the basis of clues about the likely outcome of a formal court hearing, which they found in the rescripts (批文) that magistrates wrote on their complaints (告狀).

These and many other empirical contributions have transformed our understanding of how Qing local courts worked. But the book’s central thesis is that the Qing civil justice system should be understood as a paradoxical conjoining of representation and practice. Huang argues that past scholarship made the mistake of looking at only one dimension or the other (usually mistaking representation for reality), whereas the system cannot be fully understood without taking both into account. For example, local magistrates represented themselves in the Confucian tradition as benevolent “father and mother officials,” but in practice, Huang argues, magistrates in the courtroom operated more in

a bureaucratic and legalist mode: they acted not as mediators but instead almost always “adjudicated unequivocally according to the Qing Code” (1996: 78, 233). Similarly, Qing codified law appears to be almost completely penal in character, and yet, according to Huang, it contains implicit “civil law” principles that magistrates consistently used as the basis for adjudicating routine “civil cases” (78–79, 86–87, 104–8). Again, Qing judicial discourse contained no doctrine of “rights” comparable to that of the Western constitutional tradition, nor even any word for that concept; nevertheless, in Huang’s view, Qing courts actually protected ordinary litigants’ rights on a regular basis (e.g., by safeguarding property against theft). Hence, Qing law can be said to have had “rights in practice” even though it lacked “rights in theory” (15, 108, 235–36).

Huang closes by borrowing Weberian language to argue that this paradoxical system is best summed up as “substantive rationality,” by which he means “a combination of patrimonial-substantive representations with bureaucratic-rational practices” (1996: 236). Huang’s Weberian formulation recalls Qu Tongzu’s classic argument that the Confucianization of the law resulted in a paradoxical but stable system that deployed legalist means to enforce a Confucian vision of moral order.

Huang’s elucidation of these paradoxes is powerful, but it also provokes questions, and in some quarters, considerable skepticism.¹⁷ Take, for example, the question of rights. I believe we should respect the fact that Qing judicial discourse did not have a word for the Western legal concept of “rights,” and that fact should make us skeptical about whether any substantially similar concept existed either. Does it make sense to import the Western legal concept of rights into this context? By “rights in practice,” Huang means that people could seek protection against theft, assault, fraud, and so on. But by definition, *any* legal order must provide protection against such things, just as it must provide some coherent forum in which people can settle disputes; the alternative would be vendetta and anarchy. For security reasons, the Qing state had a vital interest in preventing local disputes from getting out of hand, just as it had an interest in clarifying property claims so as to establish tax liability; also it derived a certain legitimacy from the magistrate’s pose as a defender of the weak against powerful wrongdoers. But that is not the same as endowing people with rights. Moreover, what Huang calls “rights in theory” (i.e., civil rights explicitly recognized by the state) is a definitive part of rights doctrine as it has evolved in Western legal systems: the existence of rights without rights in theory appears to be less a paradox than an oxymoron. It seems that this particular paradox derives from Huang’s insistence on using an anachronistic vocabulary rather than from any quality inherent to Qing law.

I have similar doubts about the utility of using the term “civil law” in the Qing context. Like Buxbaum, Huang equates “minor matters” with “civil cases” (1996: 1–2). For Buxbaum, as we have seen, this equation is necessary to sustain his argument that Qing law met the Weberian standard of modern rationality. Huang chides Buxbaum for naively replacing inferiority to the West with *sameness* with the West (7n). But given this rejection of Buxbaum, it is not at all clear what Huang gains by substituting the Western concept for the Qing term “minor matters.”

In the Western legal tradition, the criminal-civil dichotomy parallels that of public-private in that criminal law concerns offenses against public order that are prosecuted and punished by the state, whereas civil law (a synonym for which is “private law”) concerns purely private disputes in which the state acts as an impartial umpire, finding (at most) liability that may be compensated for with monetary damages paid by one party to the other. The two legal modes are distinguished in terms of

conceptualization, procedure, and outcome. The term “civil” in this context refers to the same thing it does in “civil society,” namely, a sphere of private social and economic activity that exists apart from and in contradistinction to the state. To be fair, Huang does attempt to distinguish his use of the term “civil law” from these associations, making clear that he does not mean to imply the existence in the Qing of civil society or civil rights (1996: 6–9). But if that is the case, why use the term at all?

Philip Huang is on record as an eloquent critic of William Rowe and others who argue that something like a civil society or public sphere existed during the Qing (e.g., Huang 1991). It is a supreme irony, therefore, that Rowe has seized on Huang’s claims about Qing law to support his own view that “early modern” Europe and China were fundamentally similar.

As Philip Huang has conclusively demonstrated on the base of county magistrates’ citations of the Qing code in civil judgments, a clearly understood (albeit unstated) “positive principle” of the code was that private property rights did in fact exist and were to be vigorously defended by the state. (Rowe 2001: 190)

No doubt Huang would reject this application of his argument, but Rowe would probably reply that he is simply following it to its logical conclusion.

It should be clear that we still have no consensus about what vocabulary and concepts are most appropriate for the study of Qing law. It seems to me, however, that by importing a Western vocabulary that has no direct counterparts in Qing discourse we inevitably imply that the similarities between the Qing and the West outweighed their differences—and such indeed is the goal of Buxbaum and Rowe, if not Huang. Instead of illuminating the Qing legal system on its own terms, such usage imprisons our thinking within a Western frame of reference, so that some idealized image of the modern West is always implied as the standard of judgment.

The Reach of the State

Another question that arises from the work of the third generation is what role the local courts played in the imperial state’s efforts to impose its will on local society. An old stereotype held that law was an autocratic instrument used to inspire fear; it reflects the Weberian view that the Chinese elites lacked the autonomy of their European counterparts, instead depending entirely on the imperial state.¹⁸ But how does the balance of power between state and society appear from the perspective of routine adjudication, as studied by the third generation of scholarship?

As we have seen, Huang argues that once a dispute reached the formal realm of a court hearing, “magisterial adjudication was governed above all by codified law” (1996: 136). In other words, adjudication constituted an expression of power, not an act of conciliation: the state imposed its will on litigants, whether they liked it or not. In most of the cases Huang examines—involving routine transactions related to land, inheritance, marriage, and debt—there were no sharp contradictions between the codified law and normal social practice. It makes sense, then, that he is able to identify a high degree of coherence between *implicit* principles in the code and *implicit* principles guiding the judgment of such cases. On this basis, Huang argues that when cases reached a formal court hearing, Qing magistrates nearly always “adjudicated unequivocally by the code” (78; see also 79–81, 86–87).

But Huang also notes that magistrates almost never cited the code or referred to it in any explicit way (hence his need to deduce the *implicit* principles guiding their judgments); nor did they usually impose the penalties it prescribed.¹⁹ Seen in that light, the evidence for Huang's claim hardly seems "unequivocal." On the contrary, it seems to me that by means of their reticence magistrates actually left ambiguous exactly what they were enforcing: social norms or the Qing code or perhaps both at the same time. In other words, the coherence between social norms and the code in the kinds of cases Huang examines means that magistrates did not have to make an explicit choice between the two, leaving unanswered the question of how far the state could really impose its will and influence behavior through the local courts.

Huang's analysis of his sources may be accurate, but an examination of different kinds of cases produces a markedly different picture. For example, I have recently analyzed several hundred cases of illegal wife selling from the local courts of Ba County, Nanbu County, and Baodi County, which include the judgments of several dozen different magistrates (Sommer 2009a). These cases, too, were "minor matters" handled expeditiously at the county level without superior review. In most circumstances, wife selling (defined as the crime of "buying or selling a divorce" 買休賣休) was banned by the Qing code; nevertheless, it was a widespread survival strategy driven by poverty (a wife sale enabled a poor couple to survive by separating, the husband using his wife's "body price" as emergency funds while she escaped poverty by becoming the wife of a more prosperous man). Unlike most of Huang's case sample, wife selling poses a sharp contradiction between widespread social practice and the prohibitions of the Qing code. Under the circumstances, when an illegal wife sale ended up in court, what did magistrates do?

They certainly did not adjudicate unequivocally by the code. Rather, they judged flexibly and pragmatically, on a case-by-case basis, guided by the particular circumstances that brought a given dispute to court. Sometimes magistrates enforced the law, which required the woman to separate from both husbands and return to her natal family; but in nearly half of my cases, magistrates either allowed the second marriage to stand or simply returned the woman to her first husband. Despite what the code required, they rarely confiscated the money paid for the woman, and they imposed corporal penalties selectively, depending on the details of a given case.

The work of two other former graduate students of Philip Huang suggests a similar conclusion. Bradley Reed used Ba County's administrative records to provide an unprecedented insider view of how a county *yamen* actually functioned during the Qing. Reed finds that the clerks and runners of Ba County developed a form of "customary law" for regulating their own affairs; magistrates adjudicated intra-*yamen* disputes by enforcing this customary law, which the clerks and runners themselves recorded in writing. These rules included the division of fees from legal cases, which, it turns out, provided the fiscal basis for much of the *yamen's* operations. Moreover, the numbers of clerks and runners actually needed to do the *yamen's* work far exceeded statutory limits, so magistrates simply followed local precedent in hiring the necessary numbers while concealing this act from their superiors. The lingering image is of the outsider magistrate's temporary presence on the local scene, the tenacity and autonomy of local personnel with their own enforceable customary norms, and the sheer irrelevance of directives from the imperial center (Reed 2000).

Similarly, Christopher Isett has used legal cases to analyze the illegal sale of banner and noble land to Han Chinese immigrants in Qing Manchuria (2004, 2007). These transactions required the systematic falsification of contracts and double bookkeeping on a massive scale (similar subterfuges facilitated the illegal alienation of native land to Han immigrants in Yunnan, Taiwan, and other frontier zones). When such transactions ended up in court, they were canceled and punished, but prosecution was rare because at the grassroots level no one had an interest in upsetting locally convenient arrangements. Over time immigrants managed to transplant the customary land tenure system of the North China plain, even though this posed a direct threat to the vital interests of the dynasty's conquest elite. The legal system was impotent in the face of this threat, and by the mid-nineteenth century the vast majority of Manchuria's inhabitants were Han peasants.

The evidence produced by Reed, Isett, and myself in our respective studies suggests that when tenacious social practice sharply contradicted the mandates of the Qing code, the imperial center was not so strong after all. On the contrary, its mandates ended up being compromised through pragmatic flexibility or, in the long run, met with utter defeat. In fact these examples point to a vast field of social practice, including enforcement by customary means, which operated outside the courts and in defiance of the formal law of the imperial state. When people had their own good reasons for doing things prohibited by the state, they found their own ways of doing them. Whereas Huang's tripartite structure integrated the informal realm smoothly into a coherent civil justice system with magisterial adjudication at its apex, these studies suggest the many ways in which that informal realm might stand in opposition to the imperial state.

Huang himself provides a glimpse of long-term decline in the face of social forces beyond the dynasty's ability to cope (1996: chap. 6). Whereas for most of his study, Huang lumps his three-county sample of cases together, in one chapter he differentiates them in two distinct patterns, each with its own temporality. The first pattern, found in Baodi County, consists of simple cases resolved quickly, after one or at most two formal hearings. Baodi had a small peasant economy, with low levels of commercialization and landlordism and very few gentry. For Huang, Baodi represents the past: an earlier era of simplicity when the Qing justice system was set up and worked fairly well. The second pattern comprises the cases from Danshui-Xinzhu, which was economically and socially far more complex than Baodi, with higher levels of commercialization and many influential local elites who would not defer so readily to a magistrate; their archives include lawsuits that continued unresolved for years, despite multiple court hearings. Ba County represents a transitional point in between but moving in the direction of Danshui-Xinzhu. Here we find a new set of conditions to which the Qing judiciary adapted poorly: they are a harbinger of a future in which the institutions of a less complex era would eventually break down.²⁰

Conclusion

Whither the study of Qing legal history? Two things are clear. American scholars will continue to develop the transnational character of our field, eventually helping to build, I hope, a single unified field that transcends boundaries of nation and language. At the same time, as long as Chinese archives remain open to American scholars, we shall continue the in-depth research with original legal case records that has become the hallmark of our field.

Is there anything left to salvage from the old Weberian paradigm? After three decades of phenomenal economic growth in China, the question of “failure” no longer seems like a useful problematic; on the contrary, China today is an enviable success, at least in terms of the classic goals of “wealth and power” (富国强兵). Nevertheless, the big comparative questions continue to fire people’s imaginations, as shown by the “great divergence” debate provoked by Kenneth Pomeranz’s eponymous book (2000).²¹ The tired orientalist generalizations of an earlier generation notwithstanding, there is much fruitful work to be done on Qing law that should help us understand late imperial China’s developmental trajectory in a broader perspective. The big picture for the peasant economy is already pretty clear.²² But the fundamental question of how political and legal institutions helped shape economic behavior has yet to be fully explored using the rich evidence that the archives offer. How did the legal system influence business decisions? Did it raise or lower “transaction costs”? Did courts play a major role in enforcing contracts and protecting long-distance exchange—or did business firms prefer extrajudicial venues for securing deals and solving disputes? If the latter, then can we speak of a parallel system of “customary” business law that flourished outside the formal legal system of the state? How did the legal environment for business change under the Unequal Treaties, as Chinese firms found themselves competing with foreign ones?²³

The answers to these and many other intriguing questions are waiting to be found in the hundreds of thousands of legal cases that survive in Chinese archives. All that is necessary is for scholars to go look for them.

Notes

Matthew H. Sommer received his BA at Swarthmore College, his MA at the University of Washington, and his PhD in Chinese history at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he studied with Philip C. C. Huang. He taught at the University of Pennsylvania for seven years before moving to Stanford University in 2002, where he teaches in the History Department. He is the author of *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (Stanford University Press, 2000), and he is now completing a book entitled *Polyandry and Wife-Selling in Qing Dynasty China: Survival Strategies and Judicial interventions* (under contract to Stanford University Press). His long-term plans include a book on male same-sex relations and masculinity in eighteenth-century China.

Author's note: This article was written in August 2009 to be published in Chinese translation. My mandate was to introduce highlights of American scholarship to an audience in the People's Republic of China, and for this reason scholarship from other countries was excluded. Because of strict limits on length, I could cover only a narrow range of topics and works, so I chose a few that seemed most likely to be pertinent and meaningful to the intended audience. A more thorough treatment would have to cover the scholarship on political crime, penalties and judicial torture, review and appeals, litigation masters, corruption, contracts, and the legal regulation of gender roles and sexual behavior—to name just a few of the important topics that are largely neglected here.

¹ The views expressed here are my own, but I owe the basic generational framework of analysis to my doctoral adviser, Philip C. C. Huang, with whom I discussed these issues many times as a student at UCLA in 1989–94 (cf. Huang 1991: esp. 322–23). Useful discussions of many of these issues can be found in Bernhardt and Huang 1994: 1–12; Huang 1996: 1–20; Reed 2000: xiii–xvii, 1–25; and Sommer 2000: 1–29.

² See “瞿同祖先生年表” (in 瞿同祖著 2003); and Ch'ü 1965: preface.

³ This book has appeared in at least three versions: the original Chinese, published in China in 1947; a revised version in English, published in Europe in 1961; and a further revised English version, published in 1965. My quotations here are from the 1965 version, which elaborates these themes most explicitly.

⁴ See especially Weber's *The Religion of China* (first published in 1915).

⁵ Bodde wrote most of the book and supervised the translations; Morris added a chapter on “statutory interpretation.”

⁶ Two other representative works of the first generation are van der Sprenkel 1962 and Cohen 1966.

⁷ See also Sommer 2000: 4, 262–64.

⁸ See also Huang 1991: 303, 320–24; and Huang 1996: 19.

⁹ Also see Alford's scathing review of Unger 1976: “Unger is indifferent to the integrity of the Chinese past. Consequently, virtually every major dimension of his attempt to portray that past is exaggerated or misleading, if not simply wrong” (1986: 917). For a perceptive critique of Alford's Yang Naiwu article, see Dong 1995.

¹⁰ For a recent report on the Ba and Nanbu County archives, see Karasawa et al. 2005.

¹¹ Economic historians in the PRC such as 李文治 and 刘永成 made a great contribution by studying data on wages, prices, and land relations found in 刑科題本; their work inspired Huang's use of these documents for his 1985 book.

¹² One can speak of a "UCLA School" of Chinese legal history, which includes Huang himself and Kathryn Bernhardt (1999), as well as Huang's former graduate students (many of whom also worked with Bernhardt): David Wakefield (1998), Bradly Reed (2000), Matthew Sommer (2000, 2005, 2009a, b), Guangyuan Zhou, Karasawa Yasuhiko [唐泽靖彦] (2007a, b), Christopher Isett (2004, 2007), Jennifer Neighbors, Margaret Kuo, and Lisa Tran. For highlights of the UCLA School's work (translated into Chinese), see 黄宗智、尤陈俊主编 2009.

¹³ So far the series consists of Bernhardt and Huang 1994; Huang 1996, 2001; Macauley 1998; Bernhardt 1999; Reed 2000; and Sommer 2000.

¹⁴ The Danshui-Xinzhu cases were sorted into "civil," "criminal," and "administrative" categories by Taiwan scholar Dai Yanhui according to his own criteria; they were not originally organized this way. Buxbaum based his article on the cases that Dai classified as civil (Buxbaum 1971: 256–57), and Philip Huang would later follow suit (1996: table 7 and appendix A). Both Qu Tongzu (Ch'ü 1962: 116–19) and Bodde and Morris (1967: 118–19) had already drawn a parallel between minor matters and civil cases, but, in contrast to Buxbaum, they believed such cases constituted a relatively insignificant part of the Qing judicial system.

¹⁵ Philip Huang has no qualms about including such cases in his sample of "civil cases," even when they included punishment for crimes listed in the Qing code (see Huang 1996: chap. 4, e.g., 95–97).

¹⁶ There were 308 cases from Ba County, 118 from Baodi County, and 202 from Danshui-Xinzhu.

¹⁷ For example, see the work of Japanese legal historians Shiga Shūzo 滋賀秀三 (1998) and Terada Hiroaki 寺田浩明 (1998) and the French legal historian Jérôme Bourgon (2002, 2004, 2009).

¹⁸ This largely discredited view continues to resonate in such works as Philip Kuhn's *Soulstealers*, which portrays a paranoid emperor terrorizing his ministers into extracting false confessions by torture, and Timothy Brook et al.'s *Death by a Thousand Cuts*, a study of death by dismemberment (*lingchi* 凌遲) that tends to reinforce (even as it claims to debunk) the orientalist stereotype of imperial China as "a realm of cruelty."

¹⁹ "My ordering [of cases] by statute is based almost wholly on *my own interpretation* of what laws obtained, *not* on the texts of the magistrates' judgments. . . . My argument here is simply that even in the absence of specific citations, a close reading of magisterial judgments in conjunction with the code leaves no doubt about their basis in law. The relevant statutes are *implicit but obvious* in virtually all these judgments" (Huang 1996: 86–87, emphasis added).

²⁰ In his 2001 book, Huang appears to back off from his "unequivocal adjudication by the code" formula: "Where there was congruency between code and custom, court actions may be mainly a matter of applying the letter of the law. . . . Where there were continual tensions or outright opposition between code and custom, legal practice could follow a number of different patterns. . . . [The courts] could follow the code in suppressing custom . . . or they could accommodate social practice" (2001: 6–7).

²¹ For a critical summary of this debate, see Brenner and Isett 2003. In my view, Pomeranz's book is simply the latest version of the old logical fallacy of arguing that China was not inferior to the West because it was exactly the same as the West. Pomeranz never addresses the role that legal and political institutions may have played in shaping the distinct developmental trajectories of Ming-Qing China and early modern Europe.

²² See, for example, Brenner and Isett 2003; Isett 2007: 277–304; and Isett’s essay in this volume.

²³ Some of the essays in Zelin et al., eds. 2004 begin to pursue this line of inquiry, as does the work of Taiwan historian Qiu Pengsheng (邱澎生).

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Science History, 1600-1900

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Despite the recent increase in the number of teachers of the history of science and medicine, historians of “Chinese science” until recently have spent much of their time researching issues in premodern natural studies and, usually, trying to explain why modern science, technology, and medicine arrived so late in China.¹ The “Needham Question”—Why did a divided Europe, not imperial China, develop modern science first?—until recently remained preeminent. This question was paralleled by scholarly efforts in other fields to explain why China did not develop capitalism or democracy before Europe did.²

We are entering a new era that is exploring modern science in contemporary China in more active rather than simply receptive terms. Increasingly we are able to address modern science in China from a comparative point of view and include it in the story of global science. The earlier lack of studies of modern science in China was not due to the burden of historiography alone, however. Historians used the potential sources for modern Chinese science, when available, to focus on individual Chinese scientists or representative scientific institutions in the Republic of China (1911–49) and the People’s Republic of China (1949–), rather than exploring the larger problems of how science has been practiced in the modern context of nationalism, state building, and socialism. The need to use all available sources to illuminate the broader practice of science in its full modern context is obvious, but the political limits placed on sensitive topics, such as modern physics, remain in place in contemporary China. We certainly need accounts for socialist science—in China and elsewhere in Asia and Eastern Europe—that match our evaluations of capitalist science.³

Accounts of Early Modern Science in Late Imperial China, 1600-1750

Classical scholars in Qing China (1644–1911) reappropriated the mathematical classics and early astronomy in the millennial quest for ancient wisdom. After 1750 the Qing court during the Qianlong era (1736–95) was fortuitously buffered from contemporary European wars and the revolutionary changes then preoccupying Great Britain and France. In this geopolitical vacuum, Qing literati sought to compare what they knew of European learning, brought principally by the Jesuits, with native learning. Although the priority was on the latter, the restoration of ancient learning allowed Manchus and Chinese to bring under control early modern (1600–1800) European contributions in mathematics and astronomy.⁴

Early scholarship has focused on how the Jesuits in China devised a unique accommodation approach to gain the trust of the Qing court and its social elites. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and his immediate followers prioritized natural studies and mathematical astronomy during the late Ming

(1368–1644) and early Qing because they recognized that Chinese literati and Ming and Qing emperors were interested in such fields. Such literati interests in natural studies and “Western learning” continued in the eighteenth century despite the impact of the Rites Controversy. Rhetorical claims about Chinese disinterest in European science are being replaced with new scholarship that shows how prominently Christianity and science influenced Chinese literati before the nineteenth century. Literati interests in European science were cut short not by Chinese disinterest but instead by the failure of the Jesuit mission to act as a reliable conduit of scientific and mathematical knowledge during and after the Kangxi reign (1662–1722).⁵

Moreover, the Jesuits did not transmit “modern science” to China. The Chinese “lack of knowledge” about eighteenth-century scientific developments in Europe, notably Newtonian mechanics and continental calculus, represented a failure of scientific transmission that can be tied directly to the demise of the Jesuits and their schools in Europe during the eighteenth century, which vicariously affected Chinese information about new trends there. The Jesuits, for example, finally introduced an accurate account of Copernican cosmology in China only after the Church’s ban on Copernican astronomy ended in 1757. Anti-Jesuit polemics generated in Europe, however, led to suppression of the order, before the Pope dissolved the order worldwide in 1773. China’s “window on Europe” was shattered by forces internal to Europe.⁶

Summary of Recent Scholarship on Jesuit Mathematics in Peking

When the French Jesuits arrived in China after 1689, they introduced contemporary French science. The French mission hoped that the Kangxi emperor would establish his own academy of science, which would emulate the Academy of Sciences in Paris. The Kangxi emperor recognized the need to continue to employ French Jesuits on the calendar despite his dissatisfaction with Rome’s papal policies toward China after the Rites Controversy. The Kangxi emperor also molded his own court’s Academy of Mathematics (Suanxue guan) on the model of the Parisian Academy of Sciences, but it was strategically named after the Tang dynasty (618–907) school of mathematics. The academy was established in 1713 for calendrical work, but only Qing literati and bannermen were appointed. This post-Rites Controversy policy ensured that the Jesuits would not be unduly influential in court mathematics.⁷

The Kangxi court sought to escape the dynasty’s reliance on the Jesuits in calendrical matters. After the *Sources of Musical Harmonics and Mathematical Astronomy* (*Lili yuanyuan*) was printed early in the Yongzheng reign (1723–35), no other European mathematical works were introduced into China until after the Opium War (1839–42). Notably missing in China was the European discovery of the more dynamic differential and integral calculus by both Leibniz and Newton, which had exceeded the static limits of Greek geometry and Islamic algebra. Moreover, the version of Euclid’s *Elements of Geometry* remained the official version until 1865.⁸

The early Qing calendars produced by the Jesuits were based exclusively on European models, but the new system cobbled together fused European with “Chinese methods.” Qing specialists had no domestic incentive to go beyond the immediate needs of the Qing calendar, now successfully reformed. Nor were they intellectually pressed by the Jesuits to do so. By 1725 the latter were themselves no

longer on the cutting edge of the early modern sciences, and their mathematics went no further than simple algebra, trigonometry, and logarithms, which had been domesticated by a small group of late Ming and early Qing specialists. In the eighteenth century, a larger community of Qing classical scholars associated with evidential studies (*kaozheng xue*) would restore traditional Chinese mathematics to a level of classical prestige.⁹

When compared to eighteenth-century developments in Europe, however, the fate of the Qing dynasty Academy of Mathematics is instructive. In France the Paris Academy of Sciences became a building block for an increase in science professionals and the institutions that supported them. The establishment of professional standards for scientific disciplines by the late eighteenth century was accompanied by the expansion of European universities and research institutes where professionalized science slowly incubated in institutions of higher learning and specialized laboratories eventually replaced gentlemanly academies. Not until the late nineteenth century would such developments commence in China.¹⁰

Summary of Research on the Qing Revival of Classical Chinese Medical Texts

During the Ming and Qing, the medical classics provided scholars and physicians with a set of general assumptions about the application of *qi*, yin-yang, the five phases, and the system of circulation tracts (*jingluo*) to understand the human body and its susceptibility to illness, which was defined as a loss of harmony in the body's operations. Since antiquity physicians had thought of the internal flow of *qi* through a series of main and branch conduits as the body's vital currents. For Qing literati-physicians, textual mastery of the medical classics and their commentaries was required to recover ancient principles and practice. The formation of evidential scholarship and the return to antiquity in medicine reinforced each other.¹¹

The oldest and most important medical classic was the *Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi neijing* 黃帝內經), which was completed in the first century BCE. When set in its orthodox form during the Northern Song (960–1126), it focused on anatomy, physiology, and hygiene in the part called the *Basic Questions* (*Suwen* 素問), while presenting a basic understanding of acupuncture and moxibustion in the *Divine Pivot* (*Lingshu* 靈樞). Treatments using drugs were rare, and the focus was on preventative medicine. Later the *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders* 傷寒論 by Zhang Ji 張機 (仲景, 150–219) applied the *Inner Canon* to drug therapy. Zhang wrote his book in response to contemporary epidemics. During the Northern Song, the latter became the guiding work to deal with infectious diseases brought by the winds. These were considered the cold damage disorders that were responsible for the increase in southern epidemics.¹²

When Ming-Qing scholar-physicians reviewed the texts, however, they contended that earlier scholars had not based their works on the authentic version of the *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders*, which was lost. The diseases of the south, with their richer variety of climates, infection, and infestation, led to questioning the government's formularies based on the Song medical orthodoxy. They also historicized the concept of illness, which they saw as evidence of long-term changes in diseases brought by the winds. The heat factor approach to the treatment of the epidemic diseases of South China became more accepted during the late Ming. Due to high mortality rates of up to 70 percent

in late Ming epidemics in the Yangzi Delta, physicians demonstrated that important parts of the medical classics had been improperly adapted and thus no longer represented the ancient diagnostic and therapeutic procedures advocated in the original *Treatise on Cold Damage Disorders*.¹³

Qing scholar-physicians sought to reverse the adulteration of ancient medical practice. Their appeal to the ancient wisdom in the authentic medical classics added to the growing eighteenth-century denunciations of the medical orthodoxy. Moreover, Ming physicians increasingly referred to case histories 醫案, although they were not new, instead of the medical classics to advertise their therapeutic successes and explain them to students and amateurs. Qing debates between antiquarians and modernists concerning early medicine paralleled those between Han Learning and Song Learning classical scholars. Like Han Learning scholars, Qing scholar-physicians began their studies with Han dynasty medical texts and the earliest classical interpretations, because the latter were closer in time to the composition of the classics and thereby more likely to reveal their authentic meaning. They rejected Song dynasty sources because of their questionable authority and the greater separation of the Song dynasty from antiquity.¹⁴

Qing medical scholars demonstrated that later interpreters had misread Tang and Song medical works. The tense interplay between an admired antiquity and a discredited Song medical orthodoxy suggests that medical studies in late imperial China were an adaptation of classical antiquity. Qing scholar-physicians thought their rediscoveries would improve contemporary medical therapies. The editors of the Qianlong Imperial Library took note of these contending medical traditions and described them using the traditional designations of schools as lineages of transmitted learning. Indeed, in 1739 the Qianlong emperor had already authorized a compilation of annotations of Zhang Ji's *Treatise* in southern medical editions. It became the standard textbook for students in the Palace Medical Service. In the midst of these eighteenth-century controversies, however, the heat factor tradition grew increasingly prominent. Scholar-physicians and hereditary doctors turned away from cold damage treatments. The shift from a universal medical doctrine (based on orthodox cold damage therapy) to regional medical traditions (dealing with hot factor epidemic diseases) began in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁵

New Accounts of the Qing Revival of Ancient Chinese Mathematics

During the Kangxi revival of interest in mathematics, a large-scale effort to recover and collate the treasures of ancient Chinese mathematics became an important part of the late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century upsurge in evidential studies. In addition to evidential scholars who stressed mathematics in their research, a number of mathematicians who were also active in evidential studies edited ancient mathematical texts and digested European mathematical knowledge. They collated many of the mathematical texts under imperial auspices during the last years of the Kangxi reign, when the massive *Synthesis of Books and Illustrations Past and Present* (*Gujin tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成) encyclopedia was also completed.¹⁶

When the first set of the Qianlong Imperial Library collection was completed between 1773 and 1781, several older, lost mathematical texts were recopied from the early Ming *Great Compendium of the Yongle reign* (*Yongle dadian* 永樂大典, 1402–25), which had survived in the imperial court. The

general catalog of the Imperial Library, for example, included twenty-five notices on mathematics. The eighteenth-century search for ancient mathematical works extended beyond the borders of the Qing dynasty. The role of the Chosŏn 朝鮮 in Korea and Tokugawa 德川 in Japan in preserving lost Chinese works is noteworthy. A special edition of seven of the Ten Mathematical Classics was reprinted by the Imperial Printing Office 武英殿. Traditional mathematical works were also reprinted in several important collectanea.¹⁷

Subsequently, collation of the Ten Mathematical Classics 算經十書 accelerated after the 1728 publication of mathematical texts in the *Synthesis of Books and Illustrations* encyclopedia. The celebrity that Mei Wending 梅文鼎 (1633–1721) had achieved as a mathematician, coupled with the publication of several new European mathematical works during the late Kangxi reign, brought mathematical astronomy into the mainstream of classical studies. Scholars associated with evidential studies rediscovered the Chinese origins of Western mathematics. While serving on the Imperial Library staff in the 1770s, Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724–77) collated seven of the Ten Mathematics Classics from the *Great Compendium of the Yongle Era*. In addition, he recovered two more from manuscript copies originally held by the Mao publishing family. The Imperial Printing Office then published them as rare editions.

Qing Recovery of Song-Yuan Mathematical Works

Reconstructions of the single unknown's (*tianyuan shu* 天元術) and four unknowns' (*siyuan shu* 四元術) techniques for solving polynomial equations in several unknowns and to several powers were particularly prominent in the late Qianlong era. Qin Jiushao's 秦九韶 (ca. 1202–61) *Computational Techniques in Nine Chapters* (*Shushu jiu Zhang* 數書九章, 1247), for example, provided general algorithms for solving the Chinese remainder problem. He also investigated techniques similar to the Horner-Ruffini method devised in the early nineteenth century for calculating the roots of polynomial equations.¹⁸

Such works energized late Qing evidential scholars who found in it a Chinese algebra 借根方 for extracting roots using counting rods that predated the Jesuits' "borrowing roots" 借根 approach. Zhu's polynomial equations went beyond the second and third degrees up to the fourteenth. These works also provided important clues about the fundamentals of Song-Yuan polynomial algebra. Chinese classical scholars at the cutting edge of evidential studies grasped the importance of advanced algebraic techniques for solving complicated equations based on sophisticated mathematical problems. At the same time, however, they focused on the recovery of ancient texts. When Protestants finally introduced differential and integral calculus in the middle of the nineteenth century, Li Shanlan (1811–82) and others appreciated its sophistication because they had already mastered single-unknown and four-unknowns problem-solving skills.¹⁹

Two types of experts emerged: (1) specialists in computational astronomy and (2) literati with an academic interest in mathematics. From the angle of the cultural hierarchy then in place, which paralleled the social and political hierarchies, Qing literati justified natural studies as the proper concern of the scholar-official precisely because they included them in the classical system. Experts, as long as they were subordinate to dynastic orthodoxy and its official representatives, were necessary parts of the cultural, political, and social hierarchies.

Qing dynasty literati thus were increasingly conversant with mathematics before the Opium War. Due to their mastery of Jesuit algebra and native techniques, they generally appreciated both. Literati mathematicians were still few in number, however, and they lacked a Newtonian mechanics to find practical applications outside the domains of astronomy and cartography. Evidential scholars in the eighteenth century were not doomed to a lack of curiosity about the natural world or mathematics, but the philological biases that dominated their scholarship did not independently support the nascent research and experimentation required in the step-by-step quantification of the natural world. In light of the important place mathematics and astronomy occupied in evidential research, it is remarkable how quickly—though not overnight to be sure—the Chinese people adapted to the needs of science and technology.

With the introduction of the differential and integral calculus in the mid-nineteenth century, for which the Chinese could not find an ancient, native precedent, Li Shanlan and other Chinese mathematicians admitted that although the “four-unknowns” notation was perhaps superior to Jesuit algebra, the Chinese had never developed anything resembling the calculus. Moreover, after the Opium War the most influential Chinese mathematicians no longer were devoted exclusively to the revival of ancient Chinese mathematics. They merged European and Chinese mathematics into a new synthesis.

The Historiography of Modern Science in Late Qing China

Even after the Opium War (1839–42), missionary inroads in China remained limited. Protestant missions principally funded the new translations, newspapers, and schools that introduced modern science in the 1850s. The massive Taiping conflagration from 1850 to 1864 was led by anti-Manchu and anti-gentry discontents who took advantage of a demographic catastrophe when total population reached about 450 million. It left a swath of destruction in South China that significantly changed the tenor of things once the peasant rebellion was quelled using new Western armaments. From the 1860s on, the impetus for science and technology shifted from the Protestant missions to the reforming Qing state and its new Western-oriented policies and institutions.²⁰

Dr. Benjamin Hobson (1816–73) was among the key pioneers in the late 1840s and early 1850s. After moving to Hong Kong, Hobson, an English medical missionary, pioneered a series of medical and science translations coauthored with Chinese for his premedical classes in Guangzhou. Hobson prepared the *Treatise of Natural Philosophy* (*Bowu xinbian* 博物新編, 1851), associating science with the Chinese tradition of “broad learning about things” (*bowu*). The missionary community preferred calling science “the investigation of things and extension of knowledge” 格物致知 in its scientific translations for the Inkstone Press (Mohai shuguan).²¹

Research on Western Anatomy and Traditional Chinese Medicine

Hobson also produced a series of other works to educate his students. His *Summary of Astronomy* (1849) and *Treatise on Physiology* (1851) were also designed for his medical students. The *Treatise on Physiology* presented modern anatomy. The missionaries believed that medicine was at a low ebb in China. Yet when Hobson translated Western medical works into classical Chinese, the heat factor tradition for

dealing with fever-inducing illnesses that had emerged in the seventeenth century grew increasingly prominent in South China, where the missionaries were often assigned. Regional traditions dealing with southern infectious diseases and northern cold damage disorders continued to evolve in the nineteenth century. In the process heat factor illnesses became a new category. The mid-nineteenth-century emergence of a medical tradition stressing heat factor therapies coincided with the introduction of Western medicine in the treaty ports, particularly Guangzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai.²²

Chinese accepted anatomy when they could assimilate it within their focus on internal conduits of *qi*. Moreover, Song physicians had mapped acupuncture and moxibustion therapy onto the skeletal body, and the internal organs had also been drawn and modeled. Chinese medical efforts to treat southern infectious illnesses paralleled the gradual emergence of tropical medicine during the late nineteenth century when the British Empire increasingly populated the tropics with its own physicians. These networks of doctors and their medical reporting system from Africa to India and South China in turn addressed interregional infectious diseases such as malaria. Colonial physicians cumulatively sent back information about epidemics and infectious illnesses to London, the metropole of global medicine.²³

Chinese increasingly acknowledged the need to synthesize Chinese and Western medicine. They linked cold damage disorders to the specific illness that westerner physicians identified as typhoid fever. Germ theory was added to discussion of warm versus cold factor illnesses. Chinese physicians began to explain the wasting of the body's natural vitality in terms of tuberculosis (wasting disease) and gonorrhea (depletion illness). Western public procedures also began to be enacted in the coastal treaty ports.²⁴

Unlike Ming-Qing astronomy, which was completely reworked in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the introduction of Western techniques, traditional Chinese medicine did not face a serious challenge from Europe until the middle of the nineteenth century. Except for smallpox inoculations, quinine therapy for malaria, and a number of herbal medicines unknown in China, the European medicine brought by Jesuit or Protestant missionary physicians was not superior in therapeutic results until a relatively safe procedure for surgery combining anesthesia and asepsis was developed at the turn of the twentieth century.²⁵

The translations Hobson prepared led some literati to question traditional Chinese medicine in the nineteenth century, however. Xu Shou (1818–84), one of John Fryer's collaborators, was one of the first scholars to complain that while literati had integrated Western and Chinese mathematics they paid little attention to the strengths of Western medicine. Xu called for a similar synthesis of Western experimental procedures, linking chemistry and Chinese strengths in *materia medica*. Outside the missionary hospitals and clinics in the treaty ports, Hobson's translations were not popular due to the Chinese distaste for surgery. Hobson's works introduced invasive surgery for childbirth drawn from the anatomical sciences that had evolved in Europe since the sixteenth century. Although anatomy could pinpoint childbirth dysfunctions in women in the uterus, such procedures were dangerous even by Western standards until modern surgery integrated sterilization techniques with anesthetization procedures to make local interventions secure.²⁶

The Turn from Western Medicine to Modern Science in China

Hobson's work represented the first sustained introduction of the modern European sciences and medicine in the first half of the nineteenth century. His 1849 digest of modern astronomy, for instance, presented the Copernican solar system in terms of Newtonian gravitation and pointed to God as the author of the works of creation. Thereafter, Newtonian celestial mechanics based on gravitational pull was increasingly presented in Protestant accounts of modern science. A natural theology also informed Hobson's *Treatise of Natural Philosophy*, which was the first work to introduce modern Western chemistry. The textbook presented the fifty-six elements, but Hobson presented God as the ultimate creator behind all the myriad changes in things. Although it was later changed, Hobson's chemical terminology presented the names of gases in Chinese, as well as the chemical makeup of the world, which supplanted the four-elements theory of the Jesuits and challenged the Chinese notion of the five phases.²⁷

By including sections on physics, chemistry, astronomy, geography, and zoology for his Chinese medical students, Hobson unexpectedly attracted the interest of literati unsuccessful in the civil examinations. Fryer described a group of Chinese literati investigators who earlier had met to go over Jesuit works on mathematics and astronomy. They used Hobson's *Treatise* to catch up with findings since the days of the Jesuits. This group, which included Xu Shou and Hua Hengfang (1833–1902), also carried out experiments. After fleeing the Taiping rebels in the early 1860s, they were invited by the leader of the victorious Qing armies, Zeng Guofan (1811–72), to work in the newly established Anqing Arsenal. Hua began translation projects with Alexander Wylie and Joseph Edkins (1823–1905), while Xu worked on constructing a steamboat based on Hobson's diagrams.²⁸

The Role of Treaty Ports and Modern Science in Shanghai

Among treaty ports, Shanghai by 1860 was the main center of foreign trade, international business, and missionary activity. The London Missionary Society Press in Shanghai became the most influential publisher of Western learning after 1850. It published translations from members of a distinguished missionary community. They worked with outstanding Chinese scholars who had moved to Shanghai after failing to gain a place in the imperial civil examinations. In the 1850s Protestant journals published in Chinese, such as the *Shanghae Serial* (*Linbe congtan* 六合叢談) at Inkstone Press, introduced new fields in the Western sciences. Beginning with the *Shanghae Serial*, the literati notion of investigating things moved from encompassing classical learning and natural studies to designating a specific domain of knowledge within the natural sciences. Through the Protestant translation work of Wylie, Li Shanlan, and others for the *Shanghae Serial*, the investigation of things increasingly demarcated the new Western natural sciences. A scientist was now called "someone who investigated things and extended knowledge."

A talented missionary printer and translator, Alexander Wylie produced the *Shanghae Serial* monthly in 1857 and 1858, before it suddenly ceased publication. Wylie made some remarkable inquiries about Chinese science and mathematics with the help of Li Shanlan. Through this interaction, Li successfully completed the transition from the traditional craft of algebra to understanding the modern calculus. Wylie and Li's 1859 translation of John Herschel's (1792–1871) *The Outline of Astronomy* (1851) grew

out of their early collaboration. Cambridge educated, Herschel's astronomy moved away from the late-eighteenth-century Newtonians who had stressed geometric demonstrations over algebraic processes.

Wylie and Li stressed modern algebra as a mathematical language for the natural sciences. They related it to traditional Chinese mathematics by substituting it for procedures solving equations with a single unknown or four unknowns. Wylie emphasized that Chinese "quadrilateral algebra" (i.e., four-unknowns procedures) was superior to the Jesuits' elementary algebra and acknowledged that Western scholars had not studied the two traditional methods. Nevertheless, Li and Wylie also refuted the theory that the science of algebra had originated in China.

Many Chinese literati saw in Western learning and the modern sciences an alternative route to fame and fortune. Literati whom the Protestants trained in the sciences began to establish links with the ruling dynasty by serving as official advisers and translators after the devastations of the Taiping Rebellion. Many Chinese who had worked for Inkstone Press in Shanghai, for example, moved from the Protestant missions to the dynasty's arsenals and new schools. Protestant missionaries also worked in the Translation Department of the Jiangnan Arsenal after it was established in Shanghai. This reminds us of the Jesuits who had changed their focus from proselytizing among Chinese. Like the Jesuits, the Protestants remained committed to the gospel of science in China because they also thought its success in government would redound to Christianity.

In the 1860s the Qing government employed many missionaries as translators to work with Chinese in the Qing dynasty's Jiangnan Arsenal. A small coterie of exceptional Chinese literati also joined the translation project as editors and proofreaders. In this milieu some Chinese grasped modern evolution long before the 1890s, and others became pioneering translators of Western medical works. During this era, conservative Manchu officials, such as Woren (d. 1871), and traditionalist literati attempted to derail foreign learning in official schools such as the Beijing School of Foreign Languages 同文館. Literati who feared that Western learning would subvert state orthodoxy produced several major nineteenth-century anti-Christian tracts. Reformers neutralized them in the 1870s, however, and they were finally routed in the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War.

The dynasty's pursuit of Western technology began in earnest when Yung Wing (Rong Hong, 1828–1912), a Cantonese who graduated from Yale University in 1854, represented Zeng Guofan in buying all-purpose machinery in Europe in 1864. Yung had advised Zeng in 1863 to launch an ironworks in Shanghai. The Nanjing Arsenal quickly produced fuses, shells, friction tubes for firing cannon, and small cannon for the Anhui Army. New machinery was added in 1867–68 along with some British machinists. By 1869 Nanjing was producing rockets and trying to forge larger guns.

In 1866 the Hunanese general Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812–85) suggested creating a modern naval yard in Fuzhou, Fujian, to build and operate Western-style warships. The regents of the Tongzhi emperor (r. 1862–74) quickly authorized the proposal. When Zuo was sent on military campaigns to Chinese Turkestan (Xinjiang) to put down rebellions, Shen Baozhen 沈葆楨 (1820–79) became the director-general of the Fuzhou Naval Yard in 1867. Depending on French know-how, Fuzhou quickly became the largest and most modern of all the Chinese military defense industries established in the 1860s and 1870s. It also had the largest gathering of foreign employees. Until the Sino-French War of 1884–85, Fuzhou remained a major center of French interests.²⁹

Subsequently, in 1866–67, the court approved a proposal to add a Department of Mathematics and Astronomy to the Beijing School of Foreign Languages. The goal was to teach students about modern science through instruction in chemistry, physics, and mechanics. The addition of mathematics and astronomy in particular was unsuccessfully opposed by Woren while he was a Hanlin academician and imperial tutor. Woren's failure encouraged Chinese literati to accept appointments in the Beijing school. A special civil examination in mathematics was successfully opposed in the 1870s, but Li's mathematics examinations at the School of Foreign Languages were influential.

New Accounts of Industrialization in the Jiangnan Arsenal and Fuzhou Naval Yard

The Qing government also established the Jiangnan Machine Manufacturing General Bureau, usually called the Jiangnan Arsenal, to administer the industrial works and educational offices. At its crest, it contained four institutions: (1) the Translation Department, (2) the Foreign Language School, (3) a school for training skilled workmen, and (4) a machine shop. In addition, the Jiangnan Arsenal had thirteen branch factories. By 1892 it occupied 73 acres of land, with 1,974 workshops and a total of 2,982 workers. The arsenal acquired 1,037 sets of machines and produced 47 kinds of machinery under the watch of foreign technicians who supervised production. From 1868 to 1876, shipbuilding in the Jiangnan Arsenal was highly productive. It built 11 ships in 8 years. Ten were warships. Five of these had wooden hulls, the other 5 iron hulls. All parts of each ship, including the engine, were built at the arsenal. When compared to the warships built following French models at the leading Japanese dockyard in Yokosuka in the 1870s, the level of shipbuilding technology at the Jiangnan Arsenal was actually earlier and higher.³⁰

Besides the Jiangnan Arsenal, the second major industrial site for shipbuilding and training in engineering and technology was the Fuzhou Naval Yard. When Zuo Zongtang submitted his 1866 memorial to establish a complete naval yard at Fuzhou he expected that after five years he could eliminate the need for foreign experts. In return those provinces would receive naval protection from the Southern Fleet based at Fuzhou. Zuo and his successor, Shen Baozhen, relied mainly on French expertise at Fuzhou. Once the Qing established the naval yard, however, the Fujian Maritime Customs left the venture in a perpetual financial bind. At its peak the shipyard employed 3,000 workers. When later construction was completed the force dropped to 1,900, with 600 in the dockyard, 800 in workshops, and 500 manual laborers. The naval yard had more than 45 buildings on 118 acres set aside for administrative, educational, and production purposes.

In terms of scale, the Fuzhou Naval Yard was the leading industrial venture in late Qing China. For organizational efficiency, a modern tramway with turntables at important workshops and intersections served the whole plant. Nineteen ships were planned with 80 to 250 horsepower engines. Of these, thirteen would be transport ships with 150 horsepower engines. Sixteen ships were finished during this time. Ten transports with 100 horsepower engines, as well as one corvette as a showpiece with a 250 horsepower engine, were built in 1869–75. After 1874 the Naval Yard sent graduates to Europe, especially England and France, for advanced training.³¹

Unfortunately, the decisive Qing defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 energized public criticism of the dynasty's allegedly inadequate policies. The unexpected naval disaster at the hands of

Japan and the way it was presented as Japan's technological victory shocked many literati and officials. A greater respect for Western studies emerged in literati circles. Technology alone was not the key determinant. Japan, for example, could not match China's two major battleships. But Japan proved superior in naval leadership, ship maneuverability, and the availability of explosive shells.

Although the late-nineteenth-century naval battles China lost are still used as a litmus test to demonstrate the failure of the self-strengthening reforms initiated after the Taiping Rebellion, the rise of the new arsenals, shipyards, technical schools, and translation bureaus should be reconsidered in light of the increased training in military technology and education in Western science available to Chinese after 1865. If we repopulate this impressive list of factories with the human lives and literati careers they contained, then we can trace more clearly the post-Taiping successors to the native mathematical astronomers that emerged in the eighteenth century. A new group of artisans, technicians, and engineers emerged between 1865 and 1895 whose expertise no longer depended on the fields of classical learning monopolized by the customary scholar-officials. Increasingly, they were no longer subsidiary to the dynastic orthodoxy or its old-fashioned representatives.

We should not underestimate the significance of the schools and factories launched within the Jiangnan Arsenal in Shanghai and the Fuzhou Naval Yard. The arsenals, machine shops, and shipyards provided the institutional venues for an education in science and engineering. They also trained the architects, engineers, and technicians in the shipyards and arsenals who later provided the manpower for China's increasing number of public and private industries in the early twentieth century.³²

New Aspects of Modern Science in Twentieth-Century China

Recent authors have stressed the decisive role of the Chinese state in modern science. They also acknowledge, however, that such an approach misses the global and comparative issues involved in the mastery of modern science by Chinese scientists. Too often we have called attention to the political rhetoric and philosophical theory enunciated by Chinese publicists of science since the 1919 May Fourth movement. As a consequence, we have overlooked the advent of early Chinese scientists themselves as spokespersons for modern science. Others have stressed the priority of artisanal practice in the Chinese setting and have naively assumed that past Chinese successes in technology were purely practical. The problem is how best to combine both sides of these formulations, to recognize that the Chinese interest in modern science was simultaneously theoretical and practical. The widespread use of the term *keji* (science and technology) to describe contemporary "technoscience" in Chinese universities and research institutes is a case in point.

Similarly, others problematize post-Mao efforts to distinguish Chinese socialism from scientific progress. Most Euro-American and Chinese accounts have indicted Maoist mass science and its rhetoric of science's role in class struggle as a smokescreen for power politics. We have elided what socialist ideals were about during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. Although the victimization of many scientists during this period and the role of Maoist ideology in leading some Chinese scientists to oppose relativity in the name of dialectical materialism, for example, are important issues in the unmasking of Maoism after 1976, the broader aspects of understanding why mass science appealed to many Chinese and some Euro-Americans in the 1960s force us to question

the easy separation of scientific practice from social and political agendas. More researchers in socialist laboratories will reveal the peculiar nature of socialist rhetoric and Communist institutions in forging myths about science that enhance its revolutionary status in China and elsewhere in the increasingly postsocialist world. After all, liberal capitalist ideals informed our own Euro-American notions of modern science as the *sine qua non* for the rise of the middle classes via science and engineering since the Industrial Revolution.³³

This account, taken as a whole, suggests a number of ways in which a comparative history of science can lead us in new directions. First and foremost, historicizing the Western scientific revolution in a global context makes it possible to compare other, non-Western approaches to modern science without reducing such efforts to simple reception history. Second, differential studies that wield appropriate concepts and categories for comparing precise historical situations are mandatory. In particular, case studies can successfully integrate scientific content and historically dynamic contexts as the key to moving from the local to the global and back again. We should explore Chinese interests in modern science as scientists there articulated and practiced them rather than speculating about why they did not act the way Americans and Europeans expected them to act. Future research on the active careers of modern Chinese scientists, both individually and as a group, will allow us to supersede past accounts of the passive reception history of modern science in China.

Many others—including scientists—protested such May Fourth iconoclasm, however. One by-product of the Republican government's increasing involvement in public health, for instance, was that Western-style physicians and classically trained Chinese doctors organized into separate medical associations. They drew the state into a contest over whose medical theory and practices were legitimate. The Republican state initially was tied to Western medical theories and institutions, while Western-style doctors controlled the new Ministry of Public Health. When the Guomindang-sponsored Health Commission proposed abolishing classical Chinese medicine (*Zhongyi*) in February 1929, however, traditional Chinese doctors immediately responded by calling for a national convention in Shanghai on March 17, 1929, which was supported by a strike in pharmacies and surgeries nationwide. The protest succeeded in getting the proposed abolition withdrawn, and the Institute for National Medicine (*Guoyi guan*) was subsequently established. After 1929 the government established two parallel but politically and educationally distinct institutions, one Western and one Chinese. This dichotomy should not be overemphasized, since "traditional Chinese medicine" as it is practiced today represents an active response to the inroads of modern Western medicine, but this division has survived both the Guomindang Republic and the Communist People's Republic.

If there has been one constant in China since the middle of the nineteenth century, it is that imperial reformers, early Republicans, and Chinese Communists have all prioritized modern science and technology. We can no longer afford to undervalue the place of science in modern and contemporary China. China's plans to send space expeditions to the moon and Mars in the twenty-first century are in part a response to the shock of heavy-handed Western and Japanese imperialism since 1850. It is therefore important that the role of modern science, technology, and medicine in contemporary China is properly understood not only by historians of science.

Notes

Benjamin Elman (PhD, University of Pennsylvania, 1980) is Gordon Wu '58 Professor of Chinese Studies, Princeton University, 2011-. His teaching and research fields include (1) Chinese intellectual and cultural history, 1000–1900; (2) the history of science in China, 1600–1930; (3) the history of education in late imperial China; and (4) Sino-Japanese cultural history, 1600–1850. His publications include *From Philosophy to Philology* (1984, 1990, 2001), *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship* (1990), and *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (2000). More recent books are *On Their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550–1900* (2005) and *A Cultural History of Modern Science in Late Imperial China* (2006). Since a sabbatical leave in 2007–8, which was supported by a research fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies, he has continued working on a new project entitled “The Intellectual Impact of Late Imperial Chinese Classicism, Medicine, and Science in Tokugawa Japan, 1700–1850,” under the auspices of summer 2008 and 2009 research grants from the Chiang Ching Kuo Foundation in Taiwan.

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¹ See the articles collected in “Focus: Science and Modern China—New Directions in the History of Modern Science in China,” special issue, *ISIS* 98 (2007): 517–83.

² Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, multiple volumes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959). Nathan Sivin redirected this approach to include successful Chinese developments in astronomy. See his “Why the Scientific Revolution Did Not Take Place in China—or Didn’t It?,” *Chinese Science* 5 (1982): 45–66. Compare Roger Hart, “Beyond Science and Civilization: A Post-Needham Critique,” *East Asian Science, Technology, and Medicine* 16 (1999): 88–114.

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Social History and Rehistorizing the Great Divergence Debate in Qing and World History

Christopher Isett

Until recently historians and social scientists alike were in broad agreement with the notion that Western European global dominance in the nineteenth century derived from a largely distinctive set of accumulated and synergistic institutional, cultural, and/or technological advantages that had accrued over several or more centuries (e.g., Anderson 1974; Bryant 2006; Tilly 1992). Keen to explain the manifest economic and political differences of the early modern world and contemporary imbalances, social scientific and historical enquiry focused on those features and arrangements that were said to explain Western European power in the epoch of high imperialism. Science and technology, modes of production, warfare and state building, property regimes, religious worldviews, cultural norms, legal systems, citizenship, and merchant organizations are some the major factors that have commonly been attended to.

To be sure, there was ongoing specialist disagreement over what these advantages were, which ones mattered the most, and how to account for them. Nevertheless, scholars across the political and disciplinary spectra considered it a heavily documented fact that the advanced parts of Western Europe (England, the Dutch Republic, France), or *parts* of it, had diverged not only in economic form but also in terms of coercive power, from neighboring and distant regions by the end of the eighteenth century. Furthermore, it was understood that, although the Far West's full attainment of global dominance would have to wait until the nineteenth century, the instruments that made this possible were long in the making. The historiographic notion of an extended "early modern" period of gestation spoke to this consensus, however problematic the term.

In these accounts, the Industrial Revolution has often taken pride of place. For mainstream economic historians, England's Industrial Revolution, perhaps the defining process of its eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was predicated on the prior development of a highly dynamic, commercialized, and increasingly productive agricultural economy (e.g., Landes 1969; Crafts 1985). For E. A. Wrigley (1988, 2000, 2006), this took the form of an "advanced organic society" predating industrialization. Social theorists largely followed suit. According to Immanuel Wallerstein (1974), the genesis of industrial capitalism was facilitated by the peculiarity of divided sovereignties in late medieval Europe and an extended period of capital accumulation via colonial expropriation, made possible by the appearance of a global division of labor. Andre Gunder Frank (1969) argued that capitalism was predicated on primitive accumulation through a system of worldwide, unequal exchanges between colonies and the European metropolises. State-centered theorists such as Charles Tilly (1992) and Ernest Gellner (1983) argued that European rulers fostered the development of capitalism as a means of enhancing

state power, building nations, or more effectively waging war. For Robert Brenner (1976, 1977, 1982) capitalism arose out of a novel set of agrarian property relations that rendered producers and elites alike market dependent, compelling them to survive economically through exchange. In their own ways, these disparate accounts of the origins of the modern world argued that modern economic development required a macrolevel change in how people organized and engaged in economic activity, that this change was manifest well before the industrialization, and that a series of accumulated developments associated with new mode(s) of behavior ushered in the Industrial Revolution.

In the past decade, this view has come under challenge by scholars working primarily on late imperial China. They have sought not only to reinterpret China's history but also to overturn existing models of macrostructural economic change. The "Great Divergence" debate, largely sparked by Kenneth Pomeranz's book of that title (2000), has elicited much attention for its claims on both the historical and theoretical fronts. In this brief review, I begin by examining the long-standing consensus, then turn to how and on what grounds a group of related Western scholarly works challenges our understanding of the Qing economy, as well as existing theoretical accounts of macrostructural change. I will examine their empirical claims in light of existing studies, as well as new work sparked by the debate. I will argue on both theoretical and empirical grounds why I believe these claims are problematic and, by way of conclusion, offer an alternative interpretation.

The Long-Standing Consensus

Angus Maddison's (1998, 2001, 2006, 2008) examination of global economic change since 1 CE is exemplary of the consensus position that the revisionists challenge. Maddison argues that following the collapse of the Roman Empire, the center of Eurasian, if not global, dynamism lay in the East, within the territories of contemporary India, China, and beyond. Their advantage lay in highly adaptable yet intensive agricultural systems, often rooted in riziculture, capable of supporting numerically large populations and substantial urban cultures and supervised by sophisticated bureaucracies managing empires of tremendous ecological diversity. However, following its own demographic collapse and attending political troubles, parts of northwestern Europe embarked after 1400 on a novel path of economic, social, and political development that allowed this region, and especially England, to surpass Chinese and Indian per capita gross domestic product (GDP) by 1500. With the onset of the Industrial Revolution, England not only diverged further and faster from China and India, but also the rest of Europe.

Maddison's project lent support to the prior consensus of historians that English and Dutch economic leadership within Europe was attained as early as 1600, that their lead lengthened over the next century and a half, and that England's economy further accelerated following the advent of industrialization (2008). In other words, the rise of English manufacturing after 1750 was made possible by a prior period of growth led by major improvements in productive technique and the progressive commercialization of agriculture. On this front, at least, Maddison's findings accord with two generations of historians who have shown that England's ascent within Europe commenced in the sixteenth century, that it was propelled at least initially by a particularly agile and productive agricultural system, and that these propelled English labor productivity ahead of its continental rivals (e.g., Thirsk 1978; Jones 1968, 1969; Crafts 1985; Wrigley 1985; Allen 2000, 2001, 2009a; Clark 1999).

Maddison's study also supports what was until recently the general consensus among Western scholars on premodern economic performance in late imperial China. As early as 1932, the renowned economic historian R. H. Tawney wrote that China's economic path had brought it to an impasse. By the twentieth century, in Tawney's graphic metaphor, the Chinese peasant stood up to his neck in water, his livelihood threatened by the slightest economic undercurrent. In the postwar era, scholars of different theoretical stripes agreed that China's developmental path had not ushered in sustained and ongoing improvements in labor productivity, the sine qua non of economic growth. Despite the achievement of Chinese agriculture in its support of an ever larger population, the absence of modern economic growth meant that manufacturing remained undercapitalized and trapped within peasant households; that technological transformation was sporadic, inconsistent, often negligible, and highly localized; and finally that the proportion of the population outside farming or in towns remained small (Ho 1959; Perkins 1968; Elvin 1973, 2006; Chao 1977, 1985; Myers 1970; Bray 1984; Huang 1985, 1990). These scholars argued, rightly in my view, that China's late imperial economy was on a path distinct from the advanced core of Europe by the seventeenth century (if not earlier).

Thus, Mark Elvin (1973) famously argued that China's economy was constrained within a "high-equilibrium trap." The successes of the so-called Song revolution, characterized by improved state management of the economy, greater market integration and rising trade, and the advent of new technologies, were reversed by subsequent population expansion. Growing population made for relatively cheaper labor and discouraged labor-saving instruments and methods, while it encouraged ever more labor-intensive production. Although food output grew alongside population, it did so by dint of ever greater labor inputs and must, therefore, have made for stagnating or falling labor productivity. Elvin concluded that what distinguished the late imperial Chinese economy was its combination of high land yields, low labor productivity, and slim surpluses (314). Elvin has since reaffirmed this view on the basis of additional research, documenting in detail how this labor-intensive path shaped China's ecological transformation or deepening ecological strains (2006). Chao Kang (1986) went further to argue that this labor-intensive path most likely produced falling wages and even issued in declining levels of urbanization after the Song.

Philip C. C. Huang (1985, 1990) argued, equally famously, that China followed an "involutionary" path of development. By this he too meant that rising output in Chinese agriculture came about by virtue of greater and greater labor inputs, all at the cost of stagnating or declining labor output. However, whereas Elvin and Chao hewed closely to a demographic interpretation that focused on the relative costs of labor and capital, Huang argued that this growth pattern was the outgrowth of a Chayanovian logic, so named after the preeminent economist of the Russian peasantry A. V. Chayanov. Huang argued that the fixed cost of family labor encouraged labor-intensive production methods (what Chayanov called "self-exploitation"), despite the tendency toward diminishing returns this might entail (Huang 1990; cf. Chayanov 1986). In this view, because every addition of family labor was free (i.e., it cost the household nothing), heads of household tended to eschew labor-saving methods *whenever* possible. If incomes had to be raised, they favored production methods and crops that required little or no ongoing capital investments even as they required an increase in labor.¹ Huang proceeded to document that China's growing population and falling farm sizes intensified this logic. As the proportion of peasant households living at the edge of subsistence grew and available capital

per head fell, heads of households had no option but to intensify labor inputs further. Idle hands and slack time were increasingly occupied in more labor-intensive approaches to farming and in low-cost, cheap, handicraft sidelines, in which peasants held a competitive edge over urban producers. But because the historical path followed entailed peasants' increasing poverty and left them with declining economic options outside of the domestic manufacture of cotton, Huang argued that peasants found themselves not only without the ability to accumulate capital but trapped in a line that offered lower and decreasing returns to their labor.

Taken as a whole, past scholarship argued (with few exceptions) that, despite increases in population and the growth of markets, China's economic performance from the Ming through the Qing fell behind that of Europe's advanced core(s). In China stagnating or falling agricultural productivity translated into low wages that, on the one hand, suppressed the market for manufactured goods while, on the other hand, enabling peasant households to undersell urban manufacturers engaged in competing lines. These conditions precluded the emergence of the classic town-country division of labor that, every since Adam Smith wrote on the subject, has been viewed as a hallmark of the modern economy.²

To be sure, scholars disagreed about how to best explain these developments, or what historical account best matched the evidence, and these disagreements are of course important for what they say about how we might understand historical change. However, it is fair to say that the scholarly consensus held that China's economy was falling farther behind Western Europe's across the early modern period. This consensus view is neatly summarized in Ramon Myers and Yeh-chien Wang's conclusion to their long survey of the Qing economy in *The Cambridge History of China*: "What made the huge market economy unique was its ability, without capitalism, to mesh tightly with the liturgical organizations of the command economy to support a huge agrarian-bound workforce and population that constituted the customary economy and integrated with a nonagrarian, urban sector of miniscule proportion." They add, "This triadic economic system favored labor-intensive and land-saving methods for implementing modest technological change. The private, liturgical and public economic organizations managed . . . to increase supply to accommodate rising demand" (Myers and Wang 2002: 645).³

The Revisionist Challenge

In the past decade a number of studies have sought to overturn our received understanding not only of China's economic trajectory in the Qing but of our understanding of economic development more generally. The challenge has come from historians of China such as Kenneth Pomeranz (2000, 2002) and R. Bin Wong (1997), as well as social theorists of diverse stripes such as Andre Gunther Frank (1998), Jack Goody (2004, 2006), and Jack Goldstone (2008). This scholarship argues that Europe commenced on its current path of development much later than previously held, that large areas of Asia were performing and even outperforming Europe leading up to circa 1800, that Europe's divergence was both a sudden and radical detour, and that exogenous forces account for this departure. The challengers argue that strains and degrees of modernity could be found in leading cores across Eurasia, yet until the nineteenth century none of these trends was sufficient to yield any

advantages. In fact, quite the opposite was true: all cores were converging, steadily approaching the limits of growth imposed by scarcity and rudimentary technology. In short, the challenge accentuates “surprising similarities,” to use Pomeranz’s phrase, and downplays differences between Asia and Europe, and argues that Europe’s rise is best understood as the outcome of fortuitous conjunctures and happenstance rather than accumulated endowments deposited by deeper historical trends.

The most synthetic and ambitious contribution to the revisionist position is certainly Kenneth Pomeranz’s widely influential *The Great Divergence* (2000). It therefore serves as a useful point of entry. Pomeranz argued that until the end of the eighteenth century the core regions of Asia and Europe were advancing along similar economic paths that yielded no advantages to any one place. In his view demographic expansion, accompanied by the rise of exchange, had brought similar, equally impressive processes of economic evolution in the Yangzi delta and England and similar, equally impressive outcomes in living standards. This was possible because the Yangzi delta encountered no greater institutional barriers to growth than did England. Its land, commodity, and labor markets were equally free, while the nature of its commercial property was no less supportive of economic growth. Furthermore, the Yangzi delta demographic regime was no more subject to Malthusian processes and pressures running counter to the requirements of capital accumulation than was its English counterpart. Finally, England possessed no decisive advantage in technology over China. More precisely, any English advantages in terms of industrial technology were counterbalanced by Chinese superiority in agricultural technology. By way of conclusion, Pomeranz writes:

[R]ather than looking at other advanced economies in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries as cases of Europe [Britain] *manqué* it probably makes more sense to look at western Europe [Britain] in this period as a none-too-unusual economy; it became a fortunate freak only when unexpected and significant discontinuities in the late eighteenth and especially nineteenth century enabled it to break through the fundamental constraints of energy use and resource availability that had previously limited *everyone’s* horizon. And while the new energy came largely from a surge in the extraction and use of English coal . . . Europe’s [Britain’s] ability to take advantage of a new world of mineral-derived energy . . . required flows of various New World resources.” (2000, 207)

In making their resource and energy-based argument, Pomeranz (2000) and R. Bin Wong (1997) explicitly followed the renowned English historian E. A. Wrigley (1988), himself inspired by the classical economists Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo. Economic expansion, brought about by population growth and the rise of exchange, tended to come up against limitations in resources, especially in land. In what Wrigley termed the “advanced organic economy,” which lasted until the Industrial Revolution, the land provided all of the food and basic raw materials required. Pomeranz argued that absent a radical shift in the methods of production, sooner or later all economies would run up against the limits of the land, turn to labor-intensive methods, and finally encounter a period of Malthusian stagnation and even crisis. Pomeranz claimed that economies all across Eurasia, including both the Yangzi delta and England, were coming up against shortages of food, fuel, building materials, and fibers for clothing in the eighteenth century. Thus, the limitations of the “organic economy” were no less real in Europe than in Asia (2000).

In sum, the revisionists claim that across the advanced early modern world, economies were converging as growth was spurred by demographic expansion attended by the growth of the market and the elaboration of the division of labor. In those areas where Chinese institutional arrangements and patterns of growth diverged from those of the European core, such differences did not matter for outcomes because any European advantages were balanced by Chinese advantages. Thus, England's lead in industrial technology was outweighed by superior Chinese agricultural methods. Furthermore, Chinese families were no less able to control fertility (and probably better able to do so) and were quite successful in delaying the onset of Malthusian pressures. Neither Europe as a whole nor England specifically was better prepared or farther along the road to sustained growth and an industrial revolution than the Yangzi delta. In fact, each core was poised in its own way for industrialization.

Luck and the Industrial Revolution

If the English economy was bound by the same Malthusian limits on growth that constrained all of the early modern world's leading economic cores, and if the Industrial Revolution did not grow out of the momentum of preceding developments unique to the English economy, how did the Great Divergence occur? In other words, why England and not the Yangzi delta, or any other of the leading economies of the eighteenth century?

Pomeranz contended that a *fortuitous* combination of the distinctive form of English mercantile expansion and the availability and accessibility of coal to English industry made the difference. English mercantilism made possible the establishment of the unique raw material and food-producing peripheries using coerced slave labor that proved indispensable in enabling England, and later Europe, to transcend the tendency to Malthusian-cum-ecological crisis, while the Yangzi delta was unable to do so. Moreover, easy access to coal, which the Yangzi delta did not have, allowed England, and not the Yangzi delta, to harness steam power to manufacturing, launching a process that led ultimately to an easing of the land constraint and thereby ensured the transition to the inorganic economy that was, for Pomeranz, the defining achievement of the Industrial Revolution. Without colonies or coal, England would have ended in the same economic cul-de-sac in which the Yangzi delta found itself (2000). In sum, the advent of the "norganic" Industrial Revolution in England was both fortuitous and late, made possible by New World colonial agriculture and locally accessible coal.

For the revisionists, without the benefit of coal and colonies England's future would have looked like that of the Yangzi delta: stagnation and the "proto-industrial cul-de-sac" loomed. Having argued that the world's leading preindustrial economies had achieved equivalent levels of development, while remaining bound by the same Malthusian limits on growth, the revisionists conclude that happenstance is the key causal variable in any explanation of the England's Industrial Revolution. Thus, R. Bin Wong argues that from the vantage point of 1750 the Industrial Revolution lay beyond the historical line of sight, there was no momentum in its direction, and it only appears imminent when historians take what he calls a forward-looking stance (1997).⁴ In short, the revisionists wish to do away with the *social* interpretation.

Joseph Bryant (2006, 2008) argues that the revisionists' claim of English fortuitousness rests on a wholesale flattening of institutional and social distinctions and the erasure of real and significant

historical differences. By this process, causation—at least with regard to the Industrial Revolution—is reduced to immediate contingencies and immediately proximate events, while the notion of history as a series of connected events and developments or of path-dependent historical processes disappears. This “discontinuous” understanding of history is exemplified in Jack Goldstone’s (2008) turn to quantum physics as a useful analogy for history in his retort to Bryant. In this accounting, history is marked by sudden and unexpected macrostructural shifts and changes. Thus, Goldstone (2002) suggests that had William of Orange not sailed in 1688 the resurgence of English Catholicism would have cut short the Scientific Revolution that ultimately made possible the Industrial Revolution (also see Bryant 2006, 438, n. 32). Within this vista, the long-in-the-making and divergent social histories of the English and Yangzi delta countrysides are in the end unimportant because neither region was on course for the sudden breakthrough. All that mattered was coal and colonies, or favorable winds.

This flattening of history, its reduction to proximate effects, robs the profession of its value, its ability to determine logics of behavior in past societies different from our own. Does it make no qualitative difference that English farms were some ninety times larger than Yangzi delta farms by 1750? That the relative size of England’s nonagricultural population was at least four times that of the Yangzi delta by 1700, and thirteen times that of China as a whole? That the English were already consuming vast amounts of coal on a per capita basis in the seventeenth century, a hundred years before the onset of the Industrial Revolution? Or that roughly 90 percent of England’s late-eighteenth-century population was separated from the land and thus dependent on the market for all its food and most of everything else it needed to survive? These, surely, are the kinds of social differences that will issue in significantly different historical outcomes, and of course have their own specific histories (e.g., Lachman 1987).

It was not luck, I would argue, but rather real and early divergences in social structures that distinguished England not only from the Yangzi delta but from all of continental Europe with the exception perhaps of Holland. On this count, it is puzzling that Pomeranz and Wong should both draw on the work of E. A. Wrigley to argue that growth was constrained *everywhere* in the preindustrial world by the resource limitations of the “organic economy,” for Wrigley rejects the idea that England’s economy in the eighteenth century was constrained in this fashion. What Wrigley does argue is that prior to the transition to the “inorganic economy” of the industrial era, England was in the midst of a prolonged period of expansion that he calls the “advanced organic economy” (1988, 2006; cf. Wrigley 1985; Allen 2000; Clark 1999). He would have to argue so because coal was already consumed in greater amounts than before (Wrigley 1988). By the end of the seventeenth century, coal was more widely used in England than anywhere else in Europe (Hatcher 1993) and it was an expression of the vitality of England’s economy that its coal industry grew up alongside farming and industry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, rather than rescuing it from an involutory path in the nineteenth century. Thus, Wrigley in fact emphasizes that there was no sudden transition to a coal-based economy in the English case but rather a gradual transition as households turned to greater and greater use of coal before industry commenced to rely on it in significant amounts (2006).

Furthermore, across most of the eighteenth century English agriculture demonstrated an unprecedented and continued ability to support a growing proportion of the population off the land without having to resort to imports (Wrigley 1988). The postwar historiography of the English

Industrial Revolution has in fact emphasized that there was no abrupt shift in per capita GDP growth across the eighteenth century (e.g., Crafts 1985), but rather acceleration in the rate of growth (Wrigley 1988; Landes 1969; Allen 2000; Clark 1999). Preceding expansion and transformation of the English agrarian economy provided the necessary conditions and momentum for the Industrial Revolution.

As for colonies, Pomeranz and Wong grossly overstated their role in offsetting any food and fiber shortages (Brenner and Isett 2003). Until the 1820s, wheat imports to England were negligible despite a doubling of the population since 1750. As late as 1837–46, wheat imports constituted only 12 percent of total consumption. To be sure, Pomeranz also argued that sugar imports helped sustain the island's caloric needs. Yet sugar constituted a small part of total English food consumption, just 4 percent of total calories in 1800 (Pomeranz 2000). As Brenner and I have acknowledged, had that supply ended, the English population would have lost a prized item. But it could undoubtedly continue to nourish itself through domestic production and imports from overseas because it cost less to purchase a given number of calories in bread than in sugar (Brenner and Isett 2003).

Finally, America did, of course, provide most of the raw cotton. But, as Brenner and I (2003) argued, it is not clear how this permitted England to overcome any "land constraint." It could hardly be said that American cotton was allowing England to overcome shortages that were holding back its economy. And, moreover, the fact that the southern states of the United States supplied the bulk of England's cotton does not mean there were no alternative suppliers. It only proves that no other place could produce raw cotton as cheaply. The fact that cotton manufacturing in England was undergoing revolutionary technological change would have offset any increase in the cost of cotton. It is hard to believe that English consumers could not absorb the difference.

In the end, only by giving scant attention to rural social conditions and the broader structural differences in the economies, and by turning to an ahistorical notion of fortuitous conjunctures, have the revisionists been able to assert that luck and happenstance rather than real macrostructural differences mattered (Brenner and Isett 2003; Bryant 2006, 2008).

Measuring and Comparing Economic Outcomes in Consumption, Manufacture, and Agriculture

In their original studies, Pomeranz, Wong (1997), and Frank (1998) did not measure or compare per capita levels, an admittedly very difficult task for China. Nor did they try to map out the long-term trajectory of Chinese productivity or standards of living in any systematic fashion. What Pomeranz did do, however, was root his arguments in a comparative examination of consumption levels for a narrow range of goods. Moreover, in line with a theoretical approach that minimizes the significance of long-term trends, his analysis focused on a single moment in time. Pomeranz tried to show that since consumption levels of cotton cloth, sugar, and tea in the mid-eighteenth-century Yangzi delta were comparable to those in Western Europe and England, there is no reason to believe that these regions were on dissimilar economic trajectories up to that point in time. In fact, similarity in consumption was taken as evidence of convergence.

Whereas there are available and generally accepted long-run series of consumption figures for England and parts of Europe, there are often no such numbers for China, or the Yangzi delta.

Pomeranz was required, therefore, to make his own estimates. And, where estimates did exist, he was compelled to readjust them upward before the figures compared well with those of Western Europe and England. Even though Pomeranz's calculation of sugar consumed did not deduct for exports, which were twenty thousand tons a year for China as a whole in the late eighteenth century (Mazumdar 1998), his estimate is nonetheless lower than English consumption rates. By his own reckoning, the English not only consumed more tea than the Chinese in the eighteenth century but eighteenth-century Englishmen consumed more tea than the Chinese in the 1980s. It is clear that in sugar and tea the English consumed significantly more, even though they had to import these goods over huge distances.

However, the most important discussion of consumption in *The Great Divergence* centered on cotton, the most widely consumed and traded manufacture in China at the time. In his original study, Pomeranz claimed that the Yangzi delta produced 300 million bolts per year, a figure far exceeding previous estimates of cloth output, which ranged between 80 and 100 million bolts per annum (Fan 1998; Xu 1992). In order to support this claim, moreover, Pomeranz argued—against all evidence—that every woman and child of working age in the mid-eighteenth-century Yangzi delta was engaged in cotton cloth production. Furthermore, in order to match English consumption, Pomeranz was required to leave out Yangzi delta exports to other regions. Regional cloth exports were undoubtedly significant since these helped to cover the large grain deficits (about 20 percent of grain consumed was imported) that the Yangzi delta economy was running in the second half of the eighteenth century (Wang 1989). The most authoritative estimates of cloth consumption suggest the Yangzi delta did not compare favorably with England.

But the problems with Pomeranz's discussion of cotton manufacturing did not end there, because he ignored important differences in the organizational framework of cotton production, where ancillary historical developments clearly mattered. In the eighteenth century, English cotton would be increasingly manufactured in workshops and rudimentary factories and was subject to competitive constraints that forced accumulation and rapid innovation as manufacturers economized on labor (Chapman 1972). Between the 1780s and 1820s, the price of spun yard fell by 90 percent as labor productivity rose. Cotton manufacturing was embedded in a very different social setting in the Yangzi delta, where cloth continued to be produced within peasant households trapped in a low-wage economy, deploying underemployed household labor to round out family consumption. With labor low cost and plots well below the size needed to supply households with sufficient grain, it made sense to intensify labor inputs in the fashion outlined by Chayanov. On the other hand, this route to peasant commercialization left very little room for accumulation and innovation, requiring peasants to compete by combining low wage labor with low technique (Chao 1977; also see Broadberry and Gupta 2006). In other words, whereas the conditions of Yangzi delta cotton manufacturing were symptomatic of what Pomeranz rightly terms the low-wage economy of the “proto-industrial cul-de-sac,” English cotton manufacturing was symptomatic of the very different process of industrialization associated with growing wages and productivity (Pollard 1981). The upshot was a predictable and stark difference in levels of productivity and dynamics over time such that even if Pomeranz's estimates of consumption were correct, it was still the case that England produced all of its cloth, and especially its cotton cloth, with a fraction of the workforce required in the Yangzi delta.

What lay behind these differences was a series of innovations that spread rapidly *throughout* the English cotton industry, leading to tremendous gains in productivity. Operating hours to spin 100 pounds of cotton fell from 50,000 required by Indian hand spinners (eighteenth century), to 2,000 by Crompton's mule (1780), to 300 by power-assisted mules (ca. 1795), to 135 by Robert's automatic mule (ca. 1825) (Chapman 1972). Consequently, productivity of labor in cotton yarn rose 150 fold by 1800 and would double again by 1825. Tellingly, while overall costs did not fall much because of rising capital investments per worker, there were significant declines in the cost of capital plus labor (Pollard 1981). Once these innovations in spinning broke the bottleneck in yarn supply, the process of weaving was opened to the possibility of rapid technological change. Between 1820 and 1845, pounds of woven cotton cloth produced per worker per year rose from 342 to 1,681 (Pollard 1981). As a consequence of this dynamism, even before the general taking up of innovations in weaving, cotton cloth accounted for 18 percent of growth in English productivity levels even though it was 7 percent of English GDP at the end of the eighteenth century.

It must be noted, moreover, that *pace* revisionists' claims about the key role of coal in saving the English economy, all of these developments occurred before the application of coal-powered steam to manufacturing. Until 1800 the cloth industry relied almost entirely on water and animal power, and up through 1850 water remained the most important source of energy (Landes 1993). Furthermore, the industry's turn to coal in the second half of the nineteenth century was merely symptomatic of the same dynamism that had animated the earlier adoption of waterpower. Contrast this to the household manufacturing in the eighteenth-century Yangzi delta, where there were few significant innovations in technology, and even these (such as the development of pedals to drive spinning wheels) did not spread much beyond the most concentrated area of household production (Elvin 1975).

If the Yangzi delta economy had in fact been as dynamic as that of England, and had wages there been growing, or had they been as high as those of England to begin with, then surely the water-rich region would have turned to waterpower as a way to reduce labor costs. The technology was certainly understood, and peasants engaged in paddy cultivation had plenty of experience building, maintaining, and operating the necessary sluices, channels, and waterwheels. But no such taking up of waterpower occurred in rural manufacturing. On the one hand, rural manufacturers, to the extent they could, combined farming with manufacturing, allowing them to accept wages so low that urban-based manufacturers could not effectively enter the cheap cloth market (Chao 1977). On the other hand, these wages were apparently so low that urban-based manufacturers or rural entrepreneurs never sought to combine better techniques with cheap rural workers in a factory system.

Given these differences, it should not surprise us that outcomes in cotton manufacturing were so different. In the Yangzi delta, between 1750 and 1800, cotton manufacturing earnings in terms of grain fell between 25 and 45 percent, and by 1850 they had fallen by as much as 60 percent (Pomeranz 2000; Brenner and Isett 2003; Huang 2002). Yet, even as cotton wages fell, rural households in the Yangzi delta continued to enter cotton manufacturing. The implication here is that the Yangzi delta peasants' turn to domestic manufacture is inexplicable à la Adam Smith, that is, it cannot be explained a deepening of the division of labor in response to increased demand (growth in the market) that yielded higher returns in manufacturing. Quite the opposite was true in England, where cloth manufactures as a part of English GDP rose *even as prices fell*. This was part of a general trend in manufacturing, which

grew as a share of GDP. Pomeranz himself acknowledges that the Yangzi delta peasants had entered a proto-industrial cul-de-sac by the end of the eighteenth century. Where he is clearly wrong is in his claim that England was either leading the way or following right behind.

The very different dynamics at work in English and Yangzi delta cotton manufacturing were the result, I would argue, of divergent trends in the underlying agricultural economy of each region. We know that labor productivity in English agriculture grew steadily after 1500, making possible a dramatic release of labor from the countryside, rising real wages, and rising demand for manufactured items. Yet, except for a brief discussion of the potential benefits of beancake fertilizer, the question of labor productivity in Yangzi delta agriculture went largely unattended in *The Great Divergence*. (Neither Pomeranz nor Wong drew on Li Bozhong's [1998] estimates of labor productivity, which were available to them at the time, and which I would argue are quite far-fetched.)⁵ Since its publication, however, in a series of published and unpublished papers Pomeranz has been forced to produce estimates of labor productivity in eighteenth-century Yangzi delta agriculture in order to respond to his critics. But rather than measure value of output or even wages—the standard means for gauging and comparing productivity—Pomeranz has measured calories produced per day worked. Drawing heavily on the work of Robert Allen, Pomeranz has argued that the average Yangzi delta *peasant* produced as many calories, if not more, than the average English grain-producing *wage laborer*.⁶ On these grounds he argues that the Yangzi delta's economy was perhaps more productive than England's, and certainly not behind it. This would indeed be a startling find because nowhere in Europe (with the possible exception of Holland) do we find peasant producers outproducing English wage laborers, putting the eighteenth-century Yangzi delta economy ahead of all of Europe (Allen 2000; Wrigley 1985; Clark 1999).

The problem is that caloric output per capita is a *very* poor indicator of an economy's dynamism, especially when trying to gauge productivity and change in an advanced and as diversified an economy as that of eighteenth-century England. That grain output per capita was greater in Poland—Europe's quintessential backward economy—than England speaks volumes. Grain output was a small part of England's overall economy by 1750, and shrank thereafter. The major part of English agricultural output was not grain but other outputs, most prominently animals, which were not produced in significant amounts in continental Europe (save in Holland) or the Yangzi delta. More important, as the economy was shifting toward manufacturing, agriculture became less important in setting wages. By 1800 agriculture as a whole constituted just 30 percent of England's GDP, and earnings in agriculture were as little as two-thirds of those in some sectors of manufacturing (Lindert and Williamson 1985).

While calories consumed are certainly an important indicator of nutritional levels, as a measurement it does not speak to the question at hand—comparative levels of productivity—simply because grain was not traded internationally. The proper unit of comparison is money wages and comparative purchasing power. Using this measure, Broadberry and Gupta (2006) showed that English real silver wages were significantly higher, exceeding those of the Yangzi delta by 670 percent. When converted into grain purchasing power, they showed that English wages were still 260 percent higher than Yangzi delta wages in the period 1750-1849. They find that, rather than matching English wages, Yangzi delta silver wages were on par with those of Europe's poorer regions. This finding is supported by recent comparative examinations of wages in Europe and Asia (including the Yangzi delta), which similarly

show a wide gap between England and Holland, on the one hand, and continental Europe and East Asia, including the Yangzi delta, on the other (Allen 2009b; Allen et al., 2011; also see Maddison 2006 and Baten et al. 2010). These studies reconfirm prior historical research arguing that England had already diverged widely not only from the Yangzi delta but also from continental Europe (excluding Holland) by 1750. The reason for this is simple enough: as Brenner and I argued, labor productivity (the value produced) was far greater in England than in these other regions, and this translated into real differences in wages.⁷

What made possible both higher wages and England's early shift to manufacturing was growing labor productivity in agriculture. Between 1600 and 1750, labor productivity in English agriculture doubled, on the basis of a regime of capitalist farming. This raised wages and lowered food costs, creating a growing home market, developments that propelled the expansion of manufacturing (Brenner and Isett 2003). At first, in the sixteenth century, manufacturing in England grew up alongside agriculture, but as agriculture continued to improve manufacturing separated from it. Thus, manufacturing in England ceased being a sideline to agricultural production, a means of rounding out the consumption basket. Instead, English manufacturing separated itself from specialized arable production and, developing under competitive constraints, had to justify itself in terms of its ability to provide a satisfactory rate of return (Pollard 1981).

The importance of the transformation in agriculture to developments in manufacturing cannot be understated. By 1700, 45 percent of the English population made its living entirely outside agriculture and 13 percent lived in large towns of twenty thousand or more, at a time when England was exporting grain. By 1800, 64 percent were outside of agriculture, and one-quarter of the population lived in large towns, at a time when only a fraction of English grain was imported, and when grain was no longer the mainstay of English agriculture (Jones 1981, 68; Deane and Cole 1962, 65, table 17). By contrast, as late as 1840, 4 percent of China's population lived in towns of *only* ten thousand whereas only 5 percent of the population was nonagricultural (Skinner 1977). For the Yangzi delta, the numbers in 1840 were higher, 11 and 15 percent, respectively, but still far behind England's 1700 levels (Brenner and Isett 2003). By proper measures (real wages, levels of urbanization, proportion of population outside of agriculture), the English economy in the eighteenth century was clearly more productive than that of the Yangzi delta.

Nevertheless, Pomeranz also argued that by 1800 English farming had "very little . . . slack left to exploit" (2000, 212) and, like that of the Yangzi delta, was heading down a cul-de-sac, marked by slowdown and ultimately stagnation and decline. In other words, even if English agriculture were more productive in the eighteenth century, future expansion was constrained by the same Malthusian-Ricardian limits that operated throughout the early modern world. Thus, it was only fortuitous access to coal and colonies that made the difference. To be sure, the English economy slowed down somewhat in the second half of the eighteenth century, under the pressures of huge costs of war and the onset of the fastest population growth the world had ever seen (Wrigley and Schofield 1981). But, just as there is no basis for isolating English agriculture from manufacturing developments prior to the nineteenth century, so there is no basis for isolating English agricultural or industrial performance in the second half of the eighteenth century from what came after. After 1800, both land and labor productivity growth in English agriculture was probably the fastest ever, based on the breakthroughs of

the agricultural revolution and without any help from the colonies or coal or industry (Overton 1996; Clark 1991, 1993). Indeed, developments followed the same lines as before with major technological breakthroughs in power and chemistry not coming until the end of the nineteenth century.

There was no looming agricultural crisis, and the works Pomeranz cites to this effect actually state quite the opposite (Pomeranz 2000, 216; cf. Clark 1991 and Mauro Ambrosoli 1997). England faced no structural shortages, and it recovered from a series of late-eighteenth-century bad harvests swiftly. The leading cliometric and macroeconomic historian of the period, Nick Crafts (1985), concludes that up to 1850 “the economy [of England] generally had the ability to cope domestically with increased demand for food and release labour from agriculture without experiencing food-price rises, while achieving respectable, but not high, rate of growth of per capita income” (121). With the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, the British economy welcomed grain imports. It was able to finance ever more grain imports by means of increasing its highly competitive industrial exports, which was, after all, a sign of its economy’s strength, not its weakness.

Again the contrast with the Yangzi delta could not be greater. As noted, not only were grain imports rising over the course of the eighteenth century, reaching as much as one-fifth of the grain consumed, but the value of the delta’s chief manufacture—cotton cloth—was falling relative to the value of grain. The delta’s exchange of cotton cloth for the grain of the peripheries took place on increasingly *disadvantageous* terms, since it took increasingly more peasant labor on cotton to purchase any given amount of grain. Tellingly, one of the revisionist scholars alludes to this important difference. R. Bin Wong (1997) writes, “European food supply conditions were transformed *in the eighteenth century by productivity growth* and in the nineteenth century, especially after 1850, by market integration made possible by the development of railroads and shipping. China experienced *no remotely similar set of changes before the 1980s*” (228, emphasis added).

One must of course applaud the critique of “Eurocentrism” that follows from the revisionists’ challenge. Needless to say, arguments of innate superiority of the West still permeate the air and continue to enter historical work as such. While in many quarters it may no longer be fashionable to hail the benefits of imperialism, or the superiority of peoples and cultures, such arguments aren’t hard to find. The Harvard historian Niall Ferguson became the darling of conventional thinkers by making the case for American hegemony and imperialism, though fretting its cost, and now seems to think that Europeans had—among its other advantages—a better work ethic too (2011). David Landes (1998) has replaced his earlier judicious accounting of the industrialization with strains of parochial boosterism. More surprisingly, Gregory Clark (2007) argues for English exceptionalism on the grounds of culture and heredity. But arguing against such binaries as civilized and primitive, advanced and backward, and so forth does not mean one must accept sweeping equivalency or reject historically significant difference. Arguments that one region, place, or nation has an advantage in acquiring, accumulating, and deploying power at a particular moment in time are not ontological fallacies. The problem is in no small part an empirical one. Theoretical shifts in terrain turn on the accumulation of new evidence to which existing theories cannot adjust. But the empirical evidence simply does not support the notion that the economy of the Yangzi delta (or China more broadly) was outperforming that of England or Holland in the early modern period, nor that England’s Industrial Revolution was a matter of luck.

Historizing the Great Divergence

As we have seen, for the revisionists the early modern world was one of common themes, parallel movements, shared trend lines, and convergences. It was also a world of differences that made little difference since it was luck and happenstance that ultimately determined England's break from the pack. They argue that the development of dense populations, complex trading cultures, and bureaucratic states was leading to similar early modern or even modern outcomes across the Eurasian landmass such that no region or place had accumulated key or determinant advantages by the end of the eighteenth century. In 1750, unforeseen and unforeseeable conjunctures lay ahead that would radically restructure this world in the nineteenth century, but historical developments had not uniquely positioned any place to take advantage of the coming conjuncture.

This theoretical and historiographical break from the past is offered explicitly as a cure to the "East-West binary," which the revisionists claim prevails and distorts our work (Goody 2004, 2006; Pomeranz 2002; Wong 1997; Goldstone 2008). Arguing for a history that lies "Beyond the East-West Binary," the title of Pomeranz's (2002) response to his critics, the revisionist scholarship is intended as a theoretical antidote for the Eurocentrism that ails us. It seems evident to me that in this regard the revisionist scholars are drawing connections—often tenuous—between their project and currents within postcolonial theory. Their relativism on the question of difference is a case in point. Yet it is far from clear how such a confluence of theoretical positions and language might advance theirs.

The problem—as I see it—is that in their desire to overcome the East-West binary, the revisionists have made the symptom the cure: the East (Asia) was not different from the West (Europe); it was the West. By collapsing vast areas of human experience in this way, the revisionists are reaffirming Adam Smith's ahistorical and universalist assumption about human nature—our natural desire to truck, barter, and exchange. The revisionists paint an early modern world in which human interests align neatly with the requirements of modern economic or capitalist growth; all that is missing is a new technology or an exogenous source for accumulation. What has changed is that, whereas past scholarship argued that these tendencies were particular to Europe, the revisionists argue that they operated just as much in Asia and perhaps beyond. In an odd way, therefore, in challenging long-standing arguments about macrostructural change by insisting on conjuncture and luck, the new scholarship has nonetheless conformed fully to dominant evolutionary thinking about economic behavior and historical development. Since we are implicitly profit maximizers in the Smithian sense, only fortuitous conjunctures can explain why one region and not another broke free of Malthusian constraints. This amounts to a theoretical closure. Whereas once the study of the Global South led the charge against modernization theory and its evolutionary notion of development and naturalist account of the economy, this is no longer the case (e.g., Frank 1969; Wallerstein 1974; Scott 1976; Laclau 1971). Today historical studies of the Global South seek instead to reaffirm the Smithian worldview. These developments parallel real world trends seemingly evidenced in the rise of China and the consolidation of the Washington Consensus, and they come at a time when the historiography has in general reembraced the Smithian model of economic growth.

In our response to Pomeranz, we argued that the Chinese pattern of growth in the Qing needs to be understood as a classic case of a precapitalist peasant economy (Brenner and Isett 2003). In other

words, it exhibited the nondevelopmental dynamics of peasant economies found across the world in this epoch —economies whose dynamic comes from a system of property relations in which the direct agricultural producers have secure and largely nonmarket access to the land (Brenner 1985, 1986; Wood 2002; cf. Mazumdar 1998 and Isett 2007). The dynamic that corresponded to this set of social property relations was essentially a Malthusian-Ricardian one: it was driven by the growth of population and the inability to make sustained increases in labor productivity, often because of the need to raise output by dint of ever greater labor inputs, and ultimately it led to declining labor productivity, stagnation, and even collapse.

In the Yangzi delta, as elsewhere where peasants were predominant in the premodern world, peasant direct possession of their land provided a shield from competition. As a result, peasants were able to choose certain goals that, while in no way unreasonable, were incompatible with the maximization of profits and increasing returns to labor on their land. These were goals and strategies they could not have chosen had they been subject to the competitive constraint, for their ultimate effect of their implementation was to undermine the cost effectiveness of the peasant household/peasant plot as an economic unit. Above all, peasants sought to provide social security against ill health and old age, and also to secure the family line. In order to secure these, they had large families and, in particular, subdivided holdings. This made possible early marriage, low levels of celibacy, and relatively higher numbers of children per woman. Subdivision, under the pressure of population growth, made for smaller holdings (Brenner and Isett 2003).

To be sure, as with peasants everywhere, Chinese peasants sold whatever surpluses were on hand, in no small part to purchase the few necessities they could not furnish themselves. But the important point is that they did not elect to specialize, even when conditions were most favorable, that is, before capital and holdings had been downgraded by household subdivision and population expansion. More important, when they did turn to the market in more significant numbers across the eighteenth century, Chinese peasants did so under highly disadvantageous circumstances, making accumulation and innovation very difficult.

Across the eighteenth century, accompanying significant population expansion, peasants in large parts of China found their self-sufficiency in grain at risk as holdings declined in size (Perkins 1969; Huang 1985, 1990, 2002; Bray 1984; Li 2007; Ellis and Wang 1997; Wen and Pimentel 1986; Elvin 2006; Chao 1985; Mazumdar 1998). First, they strove to raise yields, which they did by dint of more work. They collected, prepared, and added more fertilizer, they weeded more frequently, they added a second crop, they turned to higher-yielding but usually more labor-intensive crops, and so on. Second, those close to markets took up production for exchange as a way to add income, and especially to compensate for lost income from their shrinking holdings. Typically, however, cash crops required greater amounts of labor, and so in the end depressed wages, while handicraft incomes were usually no better, and sometimes worse, than income from grain farming.

But, even if daily wages from cash crops and household manufactures were as good as those in grain when peasants first undertook their production, over time returns from these items declined vis-à-vis grain production, as local food surpluses shrank further and grain had to be imported from farther and farther away. Ironically, had the Yangzi delta peasant in 1800 desired to specialize in a Smithian fashion, by moving to the most profitable lines of farming, he would have abandoned cotton

and cotton handicrafts and specialized in grain, which by this time gave a far better rate of return on labor. But by 1800 the typical peasant household found this more or less impossible. By that time the typical holding in the Yangzi delta had reached ten mu, less than what was necessary for survival in *good* years. Furthermore, subdivision had meant declining capital at the peasants' disposal and above all a decrease in the number of large animals per unit of land (Huang 2003). As a consequence, peasant families were obliged to apply their family labor force to plots of ever decreasing size with ever decreasing capital. Given declining resources per unit of labor, they had no choice but to intensify labor, meaning to increase labor inputs per unit of land and capital (Ellis and Wang 1997; Wen and Pimentel 1986; Elvin 2006; Huang 1990, 2002).

The implication here is that peasants' turn to domestic manufacture is inexplicable à la Adam Smith: as an increase in the division of labor in response to increased demand and growth of the market that gave them, as in the classical story, higher returns in manufacture. Rather, peasants turned to the market, to a large extent, because their ever smaller plots could not sustain their consumption levels through agriculture alone. The Yangzi delta experienced what Pomeranz calls the "proto-industrial cul-de-sac," as the terms of trade went ever increasingly against manufacturing with respect to agriculture and peasants were stuck having to do ever more manufacturing work to support their families. Finally, of course, given its inability to raise output/income per person, the huge agricultural sector could not increase its ability to support an increasing proportion of people off the land or to raise wages (Brenner and Isett 2003). The peasant route to commercialization, via population expansion, subdivision, and declining holding size, simply precluded Smithian growth.

This experience was not exclusive to China, of course. But neither is it an apt description of what happened in England (Pollard 1981). By contrast, in England the technological breakthroughs of the Industrial Revolution were explicable only in terms of a previous, more fundamental breakthrough, that is, the appearance by the sixteenth century in England of what we called capitalist property relations, characterized by the transcendence of the peasantry and its supersession by a new class of market-dependent farmers. What we did not address in full was the manner in which the English transition took place.

Brenner (1982) demonstrated through his comparative model that Smithian markets and Malthusian demographic mechanisms could not adequately explain economic outcomes. He showed that despite ample manifestation of both market and trade growth, as well as Malthusian waves throughout Europe, in both the late medieval and early modern periods, the transition to sustained economic growth occurred only in England and Holland.

Most pertinent to our understanding of the current debate over the Qing economy, Brenner argued against the Smithian assumption that pre-capitalist producers would *choose* to specialize, *choose* to become market dependent, and *choose* to become capitalist producers (Brenner 1986, 2006). Of course, he noted that all things being equal people might be expected to choose to specialize. However, this was hardly ever the case in the premodern world, where market uncertainty was great, natural calamities common, and surpluses too small to risk. There are a host of reasons, Brenner argued, why producers did not elect to specialize and instead resisted subjecting their households to the full force of the market (Brenner 2006). In fact, we find that peasants were able and inclined, on the one hand, to avoid risks and eschew market specialization and, on the other hand, to pursue social goals

(particularly in family formation) that, while perfectly rational, were nonetheless incommensurate with the requirements of sustained economic development. Not dependent on the market and so shielded from the competitive constraint, peasants did not have to innovate or match the productive abilities of others in order to maintain household integrity (see, e.g., on peasants in colonies, Bekert 2004 and Ka 1997; on Chinese peasants, Isett 2007 and Mazumdar 1998; and on French peasants, Miller 2008, 2009; Wood 2002; and Polanyi 1944).

If the transition to modernity and capitalism cannot be explained by economic choices, how is it explained? I argue that we need to move beyond the economy and a narrow, market-centered understanding of institutions to find the answer. Marx famously derided Smith's "historical" account of the origins of capitalism as akin to the Christian notion of "original sin." Like sin, capital was present a priori. In coming to his answer, Marx moved beyond the narrow confines of the economic to the realm of "politics," what he called primitive accumulation and what we might simply call history. In his conclusion to volume 1 of *Capital*, Marx argued that primitive accumulation was a "political" act in two parts. In the first instance, peasants in possession of their land were politically dispossessed and thereby rendered market dependent. In the second instance, producers secured their political freedom from extraeconomic compulsion (Marx 1992). This double move, Marx argued, came out of the political struggles and crises of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in England and gave rise to the necessary conditions for modern economic growth to begin. Those necessary conditions, I would argue, are capitalist property relations.

In his original intervention on the question, and in his subsequent rejoinder, Robert Brenner (1976, 1982) argued that England's transformation from feudal to capitalist property relations was the *unintended* outcome of the political dynamic of precapitalist class relations—in particular, the relationship between lords and peasants as each sought to strengthen its social positions within a feudal order in crisis. As Europe's economies came up against Malthusian constraints in the fourteenth century, lords and peasants everywhere struggled to maintain their social positions in the face of economic decline. In much of Europe, the ensuing economic collapse and lordly reaction eventually issued in the formation of the absolutist state, under which a reinvigorated feudalism took hold (Brenner 1982; Anderson 1974).

This was true throughout Europe with two important exceptions, England and Holland. Brenner argued that in both places peasants succeeded by means of resistance and flight in destroying serfdom, the prevailing system of lordly exaction by extraeconomic compulsion. However, lords succeeded against peasants in asserting their absolute property rights to the greater part of the land. They consolidated their hold on large demesnes before expanding them. They appropriated land left vacant in the aftermath of the Black Death and expropriated land worked by those without rights of inheritance and by levying heavy fines on transfers of property. In brief, Brenner argued that on the one hand the emergent class of commercial landlords, unable, as the feudal lords had been, to take their rents by extraeconomic coercion, were obliged to depend on rents set by supply and demand, that is, what the market would bear. On the other hand, the emergent class of direct producers, now largely separated from their means of subsistence (the land), though still possessing the means of production (tools and the like), were correspondingly obliged to maintain themselves by taking up commercial leases in a competitive land market.

Compelled to produce competitively *by cutting labor costs* to survive economically, these tenant farmers had to adopt an approach to economic production that diverged sharply from that of the past. The result was a new dynamic qualitatively different from that of the Chinese economy—and also from the majority of European economies of this epoch—characterized by sustained growth of labor productivity and a break from the Malthusian-Ricardian dynamic. This agrarian transformation opened the way for the expansion of the home market for industrial goods, made possible the support of ever greater numbers in industry and off the land, and facilitated the emergence of an autonomous industrial sector, which was itself indispensable for industrial advance in terms of both skill and innovation and, ultimately, the Industrial Revolution (Brenner and Isett 2003).

In the final analysis, I would argue that capitalism or modern economic development did not unfold with market expansion, whether through the division of labor attending the natural disposition to truck and barter or through the actions of political elites seeking to realign institutions or property relations with the requirements of modern economic growth. Nor did it result from a one-time (no matter how substantial) expropriation of surplus from the colonies. Nor was it the fortuitous outcome of new technologies or energy sources. It was rather the outcome of a specific set of property relations, the origins of which lay in the unintended consequence of political actors seeking to reestablish or even strengthen their class position within the precapitalist order. With regard to the debates in Qing economic history, I would argue that it was not a case of how opportunities shift with changes in trade and exchange but rather how actual responses to trading opportunities change by means of macrostructural transformations. In this view, a history is required that pays particular attention to the ways in which humans are embedded in local structures and relationships, how these structures are shaped by very large processes occurring at the macrosocietal level, and the ways these processes and structures establish and shape rationalities. Rather than viewing modern economic growth as the result of a combination of an ahistorical notion of human rationality and ahistorical luck, this history, I would argue, will reveal stark differences in rural social relationships that both mattered for economic outcomes and had their own histories.

Notes

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Author’s note: This essay was originally published in 2010. I have made slight modifications for this English-language version. I wish to offer my thanks to Perry Anderson, Joseph Bryant, Stephen Miller, and Matthew Sommer for their close readings and comments. I wish to acknowledge Joseph Bryant’s intervention in this debate (2006), which helped me to frame my thoughts on the theoretical significance and repercussions of these arguments.

¹ The argument closely resembles that articulated by Jurgen Schlumbohm (1981), in which it is argued that a “backward bending labor supply curve” encouraged peasants to spend time on activities that brought more income even though the hourly wage was low or declining.

² Studies of the demography and population largely supported the long-standing consensus (e.g., Ho 1959; Wolf 1985). It was argued that nearly universal female early age at marriage, plus the customary need for sons, made for relatively large families, despite mortality episodes, and the practice of partible inheritance ensured that farms fell in size over time, increasing inefficiencies and making it more difficult to produce grain and other agricultural items for the market. For a recent restatement, see Wolf and Engelen 2008.

³ I would add that this rise in demand could only come from population, given that Myers and Wang conclude that the principle engine of growth was labor intensification without gains in labor productivity.

⁴ It is not exactly clear who, if anyone, actually argues that the Industrial Revolution was *inevitable* in the *ahistorical* fashion Wong suggests. Even so, in arguing against linking the Industrial Revolution to prior developments in the English economy, Wong would also appear to contradict his own assertion that the European and Asian economies followed distinct path-dependent trajectories up through the nineteenth century. That argument lends itself to the notion that the Industrial Revolution was indeed tied to earlier and specific developments.

⁵ For a critique of Li Bozhong’s estimate of change in labor productivity and the notion of a beancake revolution in the eighteenth century, see Huang 2002; Brenner and Isett 2003; Isett 2007; and Yue 2007.

⁶ Any comparison obviously requires similar categories: either wage laborers or farmers. But Pomeranz is comparing English landless wage laborers and Chinese landholders or what he terms “farmers.” English farm holders would certainly be more productive than Chinese farm holders, taking returns to the farm itself as the measurement of comparison. Even so, the fact that Pomeranz finds Chinese landholders or renters to be

no better off than landless wage laborers in England is far from being an indication of Chinese and English equivalency. If anything, it demonstrates the wide gap between the two populations.

⁷ Given the disparities in wage levels between England and the Yangzi delta, the revisionists may wish to argue that the delta was simply on a different growth path. However, the revisionists reject this line, insisting that the entire premodern world was constrained by the same Malthusian limits. Thus, Pomeranz specifically rejected Sugihara Kaoru's contrasting characterizations of development in the East as labor intensive and in the West as capital intensive (2000).

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Studies of China's Economy

Thomas G. Rawski

Despite the tendency among academic economists to emphasize theory, technique, and empirical work on the United States and other high-income nations, the study of China's economy maintains a modest but lively presence within the community of North American economists. Building on recent work by Penelope B. Prime¹ and Gary H. Jefferson,² this review will highlight key stages in the development of Chinese economic studies, identify topics that have attracted clusters of research, point to areas in which China-oriented research has opened new pathways for economic research, and sketch emerging areas of research focus.

Hosea Ballou Morse (1855–1934) stands out as the first American researcher to focus on China's economy. A Harvard graduate, Morse spent decades in China, where he became a commissioner of China's Maritime Customs while producing valuable studies of China's guilds, international trade, and domestic administration.³

Charles F. Remer (1889–1972) and John Lossing Buck (1890–1975) were the first academic economists to specialize in China-related research. Based at the University of Michigan, Remer produced studies of China's international trade and incoming foreign investment, and also of trade boycotts, which served as an outlet for nationalist sentiments during the decades preceding World War II.⁴ Buck, who taught for many years at what is now Nanjing University, produced massive studies of China's rural economy that are widely cited even today.⁵ During this early period, Ralph M. Odell, a textile analyst within the US government, produced detailed analyses of cotton manufacture in China (and many other nations).⁶

With encouragement from Simon Kuznets (1901–85), the future Nobel laureate, systematic study of China's national income began during the 1940s. Ta-chung Liu (1914–75) published an exploratory study of China's national income during the 1930s,⁷ which subsequently expanded into a massive comparison of China's economy during the 1930s and 1950s.⁸ Professor Liu was also prominent among the group of academic economists who helped launch Taiwan onto its pioneering trajectory of outward-looking economic growth during the late 1950s, a development that influenced China's decision to launch its own policy of economic opening two decades later.⁹

As the Cold War intensified, the US government and private donors provided financial support to students and researchers studying Communist bloc nations, including China. In 1961 the Social Science Research Council established a Committee on the Economy of China, chaired by Simon Kuznets. This group produced a series of volumes, including Dwight H. Perkins's study of long-term trends in Chinese agriculture, Nai-ruenn Chen's compendium of Chinese economic statistics, and a volume on economic trends in the People's Republic.¹⁰

This committee and its successors worked to create a community of China-oriented economists, supporting important conference volumes edited by Dwight H. Perkins and Robert F. Dernberger,¹¹ and sponsoring less formal gatherings to provide opportunities for young researchers (including this author, who began graduate study in 1965) to present their own work and become acquainted with established scholars. Alexander Eckstein (1915–76), a prominent contributor to these efforts, organized seminars and conferences and encouraged younger specialists while pursuing his own research.¹² The Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress sponsored a series of volumes that showcased China-related studies by government and academic economists.¹³

The common method underlying these studies, particularly those focused on the People's Republic, was the use of fragmentary data to reconstruct the broader economic landscape. This approach arose from the paucity of systematic data prior to 1949, and from the limited publication of economic statistics under the People's Republic until the appearance of the *China Statistics Yearbook* [中国统计年鉴] in 1981. This focus on fragmentary information resurfaced in the late 1990s when some observers, including the present author, questioned the reliability of official growth figures during the slowdown that followed the Asian financial crisis,¹⁴ and again in 2008–9, when official reports were scrutinized for possible exaggeration of short-term performance in the wake of the global financial crisis and subsequent recession.

The establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Canada (1970), the gradual expansion of links between China and the United States beginning with President Nixon's visit to China (1972), and the eventual normalization of relations (1979) thoroughly transformed the research agenda for China-oriented economists, who could now conduct field studies within China,¹⁵ pursue collaborative research with Chinese colleagues,¹⁶ recruit Chinese students to study in their home institutions,¹⁷ and create personal networks to facilitate data collection and access to informants and field sites.

China's subsequent shift toward publication of a growing array of economic data enabled economists to contemplate an expanding universe of quantitative studies. Once noted for its failure to provide detailed economic information, China now routinely issues vast quantities of data through open publications and, most recently, official websites. Additional research opportunities arise from the growing availability, typically through informal channels, of large data sets based on detailed information about demographics, household income and expenditures, enterprises, research institutes, or foreign trade transactions, which has encouraged recent research on income distribution (discussed below), industrial development,¹⁸ innovation,¹⁹ and trade.²⁰

China's "open door" policy has also allowed overseas researchers to implement projects, typically working with Chinese colleagues, that combine written surveys and field interviews. Some of this work incorporates China into multicountry studies such as the World Bank's investment climate survey.²¹ Other projects have added new dimensions to available knowledge of subjects like migration²² and rural finance.²³

Generations of studies that present broad overviews of China's economy clearly reflect this massive expansion of data availability. Whereas early volumes by Alexander Eckstein (1977) and Christopher Howe (1978) focus on a narrow array of measures centered on national aggregates and foreign trade, subsequent work from the World Bank (1983), Carl Riskin (1987), and Barry Naughton (2007) and a 2008 volume edited by Loren Brandt and Thomas G. Rawski reveal a progressive expansion in

the range and depth of data sources.²⁴ Indeed, Chinese data sometimes provide researchers with opportunities that extend beyond what is available elsewhere—as when the availability of national income data for metropolitan areas allowed researchers to conduct empirical tests of propositions flowing from the “new economic geography.”²⁵

China's combination of remarkable economic gains and rich data resources has attracted the interest of prominent economists beyond the modest ranks of “China specialists.” Lloyd Reynolds (1910–2005) was an early example.²⁶ Many Nobel laureates, including Simon Kuznets (1901–1985), Herbert Simon (1916–2001), Leonid Hurwicz (1917–2008) and Lawrence R. Klein developed a deep interest in China's economy and society. Amartya Sen contributed to an early conference volume on China's economy and comments frequently on China-related subjects, often in the context of China-India comparisons.²⁷ Robert Mundell has offered opinions and advice on the evolution of China's renminbi currency.²⁸ James J. Heckman has written on Chinese education.²⁹ Robert W. Fogel has examined issues surrounding China's health care and growth prospects.³⁰ Paul Krugman has jostled with Chinese colleagues on exchange rate management and other issues related to China's role in the global economy.³¹

China-related research by North American economists displays endless variety,³² but it clusters around major topics, several of which receive detailed treatment in Penelope Prime's 2007 review. Subsequent work in these areas includes a review of China's overall growth since 1952 and forecasts to 2025 by Perkins and Rawski,³³ new contributions on the political economy of Chinese growth by Naughton,³⁴ an innovative exploration of Chinese growth mechanics in which Loren Brandt, Chang-tai Hsieh, and Xiaodong Zhu use a three-sector model to show how state ownership hinders both growth and structural change,³⁵ a penetrating analysis of China's fiscal system by Christine Wong and Richard Bird,³⁶ and new work on finance that, among other contributions, places China's financial system in an international context.³⁷

We can also cite substantial work in topics for which Prime's survey provided no detailed mention. These include the following.

Labor, Wages, and Education

These topics have attracted many authors. Results include early work by Thomas Rawski,³⁸ Jeffrey R. Taylor,³⁹ and others; extensive reviews of research on both labor and education;⁴⁰ a book of essays on education edited by Emily Hannum and Albert Park;⁴¹ and essays by Xiao-yuan Dong,⁴² Belton Fleisher,⁴³ and Margaret Maurer-Fazio,⁴⁴ among others.

Industrial Development and Enterprise Behavior

These topics have also attracted substantial attention beginning with early studies by Kang Chao,⁴⁵ Chu-yuan Cheng,⁴⁶ Thomas Rawski,⁴⁷ and Yuan-li Wu.⁴⁸ In addition to studies of large-scale industry, which include a substantial volume edited by Gary H. Jefferson and Inderjit Singh,⁴⁹ China's development of rural industry attracted considerable attention, including works by Carl Riskin and Martin Weitzman and Chenggang Xu,⁵⁰ a World Bank–sponsored volume edited by William Byrd and Qingsong Lin,⁵¹ and later studies focused on the recent privatization of so-called township and village (TVE) enterprises.⁵²

Macroeconomics, Finance, and Capital Markets

Contributions in this area include Nicholas Lardy's widely cited monograph,⁵³ essays on the political economy of reform by Yingyi Qian and several coauthors,⁵⁴ work by Loren Brandt and Xiaodong Zhu on inflation dynamics,⁵⁵ and numerous analyses of firms listed on China's Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges.⁵⁶

Distribution, Inequality, and Poverty Alleviation

Steep increases in income inequality during the reform era have sparked extensive study of distributional issues, in part because of the erroneous perception that income inequality in prereform China was unusually low in international terms, a view contested by Thomas Rawski.⁵⁷ Recent studies, bolstered by the growing availability of census and survey data, include contributions by Carl Riskin and Azizur R. Khan;⁵⁸ a review by Dwayne Benjamin, Brandt, John Giles, and Sangui Wang;⁵⁹ and several collections of papers.⁶⁰ China's achievements in liberating several hundred million citizens from the clutches of absolute poverty have attracted considerable attention, especially from World Bank researchers.⁶¹

International Trade, Investment, and Finance

Long a staple topic for international researchers using data available from China's trade partners,⁶² these topics have attracted renewed interest because of China's steeply rising involvement in a broad array of global markets. Recent contributions include books by Nicholas Lardy; an overview of China's globalization by Lardy and Lee Branstetter;⁶³ essays by authors such as Peter Schott,⁶⁴ Robert Feenstra, and Hiau Looi Kee,⁶⁵ Brandt, Rawski, and Xiaodong Zhu;⁶⁶ and analyses of international currency and financial disequilibria by Ronald McKinnon,⁶⁷ Wing Thye Woo,⁶⁸ and others.

Agriculture, Rural Policy, and Out-migration of Villagers

With its history of sweeping institutional changes—from fully marketized private farming through land reform, collectives, people's communes, and, twenty years later, the household responsibility system and a subsequent move in the direction of market revival—and equally dramatic shifts in output, productivity, and structure, China's farm sector has occupied a central position among the research interests of China-oriented economists. The long list of studies includes books by Dwight Perkins,⁶⁹ Peter Schran,⁷⁰ Nicholas Lardy,⁷¹ and Louis Putterman;⁷² lively debate about the impact of commune organization on incentives and productivity and, through them, on the great famine of 1959–61;⁷³ analysis of how the return to household farming sparked steep increases in farm output;⁷⁴ and ongoing studies of the evolution of Chinese agriculture and the rural economy, most notably by Scott Rozelle and a wide array of coauthors.⁷⁵

Economic Growth and the Environment

With environmental issues playing a growing role in China's domestic policy and international relations, economists have focused increasing attention on this subject. On the domestic side, a broad review by James Roumasset, Kimberley Burnett, and Hua Wang finds that China's recent burst of growth

has produced rather modest environmental costs, which do not justify the alarmist claims that have received wide circulation in North American media.⁷⁶ Thomas Rawski's study of trends in urban air quality reaches similar conclusions.⁷⁷ Wing 'Thye Woo has addressed the issues raised by China's emergence as the largest national source of the greenhouse gases that raise the likelihood of global warming.⁷⁸

International Comparisons

China's dramatic economic gains have sparked growing interest in cross-national comparisons aimed at comparing Chinese performance with international norms and highlighting special features associated with China's massive growth spurt. Studies of this genre include work focused specifically on China and India;⁷⁹ analyses of East Asia focused on urbanization,⁸⁰ innovation,⁸¹ food policy,⁸² and future growth prospects;⁸³ and cross-national statistical comparisons.⁸⁴

New knowledge about China's economy does not come only from economists. Scholars from many fields have added important elements of breadth and depth to our understanding of the nature and evolution of China's economy. The following brief observations capture some of the many some of the many economically relevant studies contributed by non-economist authors.

Geography

While economists have devoted only limited attention to spatial issues,⁸⁵ geographers have contributed substantial studies in a number of areas, including urbanization,⁸⁶ environment,⁸⁷ migration,⁸⁸ and the impact of the Three Gorges dam project.⁸⁹

Anthropology

Field studies focused on households and communities, typically in rural areas, have obvious potential for mapping important features of economic life at the microlevel. Studies that delve into the realities of local economic organization, the informal governance of rural communities, the use of contracts and other management tools, and the behavior of small-scale entrepreneurs add new dimensions to the picture that emerges from the statistical methods favored by economists.⁹⁰ Starting with materials from local field studies, G. William Skinner (1923–2008) constructed comprehensive models that placed market relations at the heart of social, political, linguistic, and cultural patterns; the impact of his work on local systems extended far beyond China studies.⁹¹

Sociology

Like their anthropological colleagues, sociologists have produced numerous studies rooted in field studies of particular segments of society: urban and rural communities,⁹² factory management,⁹³ labor relations,⁹⁴ and inequality,⁹⁵ among others, all with important implications for understanding economic structure and behavior.

Government

Researchers specializing in the study of Chinese politics have produced valuable research on a wide array of economic topics, including environmental issues,⁹⁶ rural issues (including the great famine of 1959–61),⁹⁷ the growing impact of lobbying and public opinion on official policy,⁹⁸ the structure and development of science and technology,⁹⁹ the organization and management of important industries,¹⁰⁰ the financial system,¹⁰¹ industrial policy,¹⁰² labor reform,¹⁰³ and general studies of China's political economy.¹⁰⁴

Economic history, a territory long shared between economists and historians, deserves particular attention. Researchers in both fields have contributed mightily to the expansion of knowledge in this area during the present author's professional lifetime. Looking back over several decades, we see broad overviews,¹⁰⁵ as well as illuminating studies in many fields, including prices,¹⁰⁶ the production, marketing, and distribution of products ranging from rice, silk, tea, sugar, cotton textiles, and cigarettes to books and sexual services;¹⁰⁷ market integration;¹⁰⁸ demography;¹⁰⁹ public administration;¹¹⁰ institutions;¹¹¹ education;¹¹² science;¹¹³ commerce;¹¹⁴ business;¹¹⁵ contracts;¹¹⁶ regional economies;¹¹⁷ income distribution;¹¹⁸ and many others.

China's astonishing growth over the past three decades, which qualifies as a major event in world economic history, raises obvious historical questions about the wellsprings of this growth eruption. Instead of seeking to explain China's failure to develop—a staple topic during this author's undergraduate studies in the early 1960s—it now seems essential to ask what social and cultural (as well as economic) formations encouraged and supported China's high-speed growth and why such growth appeared only after 1978. What, for example, retarded China's growth during the final decades of the Qing dynasty, roughly 1870–1911, a period of relative domestic stability during which China benefited from postwar recovery (following the Taiping rebellion), a full-fledged market economy, an international regimen of free trade and (after 1895) investment, and a government that was somewhat inclined to pursue growth-oriented reforms?

As economists begin to consider the determinants of long-term growth, they find themselves scrambling to catch up with the work of historians who have staked out challenging positions well in advance of their colleagues from the dismal science. Reacting against the idea that stagnation or decline dominated China's pre-1949 economy, a cluster of studies published around 1990 argued that China achieved modest but definite advances in output, industrialization, urbanization, and even income per person during the decades prior to the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1937.¹¹⁹ These studies, grounded in extensive documentary research, focused exclusively on China's economy and, partly as a result, attracted little attention beyond the China field.

More recently a group of historians known collectively as the "California school" launched a wave of publications that expanded both the time frame and the geographic scope of research on long-term trends in China's economy. The key arguments of this group, most clearly articulated by Kenneth Pomeranz, are that prior to the British Industrial Revolution there was little difference in economic structure or per capita income between China's commercialized lower Yangzi region and economically advanced areas of Western Europe, and, furthermore, that Britain's head start in industrialization arose from its easy access to coal rather than from any advantage linked to political, legal, or other institutional factors.¹²⁰

Although these specific claims seem unlikely to withstand careful examination,¹²¹ this new work has electrified specialists studying both Europe and Asia, sparked enormous controversy, and transformed the formerly sleepy and isolated field of Chinese economic history into a focal point for intensive research and analysis by a substantially enlarged community of researchers. In short the California school has become a prime mover in creating a dynamic and exciting field of international or global economic history.

Thanks to the efforts of Pomeranz and his colleagues, we can now look forward to a third wave of economic history research that can combine extensive institutional knowledge with the documentary strength and quantitative depth of earlier studies, as well as the broad sweep and interpretive flair of the California school.

This is only one of many new avenues that await future scholars of China's economy. In addition to issues surrounding China's spatial economy (mentioned above), the list of important but neglected topics includes (but is surely not limited to) big business; industrial organization; health care, pensions, and other social safety net provisions; microlevel studies showing the impact of international trade and incoming foreign direct investment; and the overseas and domestic impact of China's rapidly expanding overseas direct investment.

As occurred in the decades following Japan's emergence as a major economic power, growing awareness of China's economic circumstances has begun to penetrate the structure of economic science. So far the impact remains modest: China's long-term experience undercuts the "law of diminishing returns" and shatters antiglobalist claims that participation in world markets damages poor nations and poor people. China's recent development negates the "Washington consensus" and challenges important elements of the "new institutional economics." Its reform experience indicates that economists may have exaggerated the benefits of private ownership and undervalued competition.

But this is only the beginning. Further study will expand our understanding of the structure, operation, and management of China's economy. This new knowledge will enhance our capacity to analyze Chinese policy and performance; it may permit better forecasts of Chinese economic outcomes; it will certainly enrich the discipline of economics.

Notes

Thomas G. Rawski, Professor of Economics and History, joined the University of Pittsburgh's faculty in 1985 after fourteen years at the University of Toronto. His research focuses on the development and modern history of China's economy, including studies of China's reform mechanism and achievements, as well as analyses focused on productivity, investment, industry, trade, labor markets, environment, and economic measurement. His publications include books on economic growth and employment in China, Chinese history in economic perspective, economic growth in prewar China, China's transition to industrialization, and economics and the historian. He is coeditor of the recent volumes *China's Rise and the Balance of Influence in Asia* (with William W. Keller, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007) and *China's Great Economic Transformation* (with Loren Brandt, Cambridge University Press, 2008).

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¹ Penelope B. Prime, "Studies of China's Economy in the United States," in Robert F. Ash, David L. Shambaugh, and Seiichiro Takagi (eds.), *China Watching: Perspectives from Europe, Japan, and the United States* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), ix, 261.

² Gary H. Jefferson, "How Has China's Economic Emergence Contributed to the Field of Economics?," *Comparative Economic Studies* 50, no. 2 (2008): 167–209.

³ Hosea Ballou Morse, *The International Relations of the Chinese Empire* (London and New York: Longmans, Green, ,1910); *The Trade and Administration of China* (London and New York: Longmans, Green, ,1913); *The Gilds of China* (London and New York: Longmans, Green, ,1932).

⁴ C. F. Remer, *The Foreign Trade of China* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1926); *Foreign Investments in China* (New York: Macmillan, 1933); *A Study of Chinese Boycotts, with Special Reference to Their Economic Effectiveness* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1933).

⁵ John Lossing Buck, *Land Utilization in China, a Study of 16,786 Farms in 168 Localities, and 38,256 Farm Families in Twenty-Two Provinces in China, 1929–1933* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1937); *Land Utilization in China: Statistics* (Nanking, Shanghai, and Chicago: University of Nanking, Commercial Press, and University of Chicago Press, 1937).

⁶ US Department of Commerce, Ralph Milton Odell, and US Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, *Cotton Goods in China* (Washington, DC: „Government Printing Office, 1916).

⁷ Ta-chung Liu, *China's National Income, 1931–36* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1946).

⁸ Ta-chung Liu and K. C. Yeh, *The Economy of the Chinese Mainland: National Income and Economic Development, 1933–1959* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965).

⁹ Limin Xue, Chen-kuo Hsu, and Dwight H. Perkins, *Industrialization and the State: The Changing Role of the Taiwan Government in the Economy, 1945–1998* ([Cambridge, MA]: Harvard Institute for International Development [at] Harvard University and Chung-hua Institution for Economic Research, 2001).

¹⁰ Nai-ruenn Chen, *Chinese Economic Statistics: A Handbook for Mainland China* (Chicago: Aldine, 1967); Alexander Eckstein, Walter Galenson, and Ta-chung Liu, *Economic Trends in Communist China* (Chicago: Aldine, 1968); Dwight H. Perkins, *Agricultural Development in China, 1368–1968* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

¹¹ Robert F. Dernberger, *China's Development Experience in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980); Dwight H. Perkins, *China's Modern Economy in Historical Perspective* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975).

¹² Alexander Eckstein, *The National Income of Communist China* ([New York]: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962); Alexander Eckstein, *China's Economic Development: The Interplay of Scarcity and Ideology* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975).

¹³ For example, see US Congress, Joint Economic Committee, *China's Economy Looks toward the Year 2000: Selected Papers* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1986).

¹⁴ Thomas G. Rawski, "What Is Happening to China's GDP Statistics?," *China Economic Review* 12, no. 4 (2001): 347–54.

¹⁵ See, for example, American Rural Small-Scale Industry Delegation, *Rural Small-Scale Industry in the People's Republic of China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); American Wheat Studies Delegation, Virgil Allen Johnson, Halsey L. Beemer, and Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China (U.S.), *Wheat in the People's Republic of China: A Trip Report of the American Wheat Studies Delegation* (Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 1977); and Andrew G. Walder, *Zouping in Transition: The Process of Reform in Rural North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

¹⁶ Examples include joint work on the measurement of industrial capital and productivity by several US economists and a group of researchers at the Institute of Quantitative Economics of the Chinese Academy of Social Science (CASS); research on income distribution by members of the CASS Economics Institute and a number of international researchers; and rural survey work in which Loren Brandt, Albert Park, Scott Rozelle, and other North American specialists have worked with Huang Jikun, Zhang Linxiu, and many other Chinese researchers. See, for example, Kuan Chen, Gary H. Jefferson, Thomas G. Rawski, Hongchang Wang, and Yuxin Zheng, "New Estimates of Fixed Investment and Capital Stock for Chinese State Industry," *China Quarterly*, no. 114 (1988): 243–66; Gary H. Jefferson et al., "Ownership, Productivity Change, and Financial Performance in Chinese Industry," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 28, no. 4 (2000): 786–813; Renfu Luo, Linxiu Zhang, Jikun Huang, and Scott Rozelle, "Elections, Fiscal Reform, and Public Goods Provision in Rural China," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 35, no. 3 (2007): 583–611; and Carl Riskin, Renwei Zhao, and Shi Li, *China's Retreat from Equality: Income Distribution and Economic Transition* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2001).

¹⁷ A number of returned students have assumed prominent positions – for example YI Gang at the People's Bank of China, FANG Xinghai in the Shanghai Municipal government, ZUO Xuejin at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, LI Ling, LIN Yifu, ZHAO Yaohui and ZHOU Qiren at Peking University, and BAI Chong'en, LI Daokui, and QIAN Yingyi at Tsinghua University.

¹⁸ Loren Brandt, Thomas G. Rawski, and John Sutton, "China's Industrial Development," chapter 15 in Loren Brandt and Thomas G. Rawski (eds.), *China's Great Economic Transformation* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

¹⁹ Karen Fisher-Vanden and Gary H. Jefferson, "Technology Diversity and Development: Evidence from China's Industrial Enterprises," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 36, no. 4 (2008): 658–72; Albert G. Z. Hu, Gary H. Jefferson, and Qian Jinchang, "R&D and Technology Transfer: Firm-Level Evidence from Chinese Industry," *Review of Economics and Statistics* 87, no. 4 (2005): 780–86.

²⁰ One example is Kalina Manova and Zhiwei Zhang, "China's Exporters and Importers: Firms, Products, and Trade Partners," unpublished conference paper, 2008.

²¹ For example, see World Bank, *A Better Investment Climate for Everyone* (Washington, DC, and New York: World Bank and Oxford University Press, 2004).

²² For example, see Linxiu Zhang, Scott Rozelle, and Jikun Huang, "Off-Farm Jobs and On-Farm Work in Periods of Boom and Bust in Rural China," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 29, no. 3 (2001): 505–26.

²³ Loren Brandt and Hongbin Li, "Bank Discrimination in Transition Economies: Ideology, Information, or Incentives?," *Journal of Comparative Economics* 31 (2003): 387–413; Albert Park, Loren Brandt, and John Giles, "Competition under Credit Rationing: Theory and Evidence from Rural China," *Journal of Development Economics* 71, no. 2 (2003): 463–95.

²⁴ Brandt and Rawski, *China's Great Economic Transformation*; Alexander Eckstein, *China's Economic Revolution* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Christopher Howe, *China's Economy: A Basic Guide* (New York: Basic Books, 1978); Barry Naughton, *The Chinese Economy: Transitions and Growth* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007); World Bank, *China: Socialist Economic Development* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1983).

²⁵ For theory, see Masahisa Fujita, Paul R. Krugman, and Anthony Venables, *The Spatial Economy: Cities, Regions, and International Trade* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999); for China applications, see Chun-Chung Au and J. Vernon Henderson, "Are Chinese Cities Too Small?," *Review of Economic Studies* 73, no. 3 (2006): 549–76; Chun-Chung Au and J. Vernon Henderson, "How Migration Restrictions Limit Agglomeration and Productivity in China," *Journal of Development Economics* 80, no. 2 (2006): 350–88; and Kam Wing Chan, J. Vernon Henderson, and Kai Yuen Tsui, "Spatial Dimensions of Chinese Economic Development," chapter 19 in Brandt and Rawski, *China's Great Economic Transformation*.

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Social Science Research on Chinese Organizations in the English Literature: A Survey

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Introduction: Intellectual Landscape in the Study of Chinese Organizations

In this essay, we survey and assess the English literature of what we have loosely grouped under the umbrella of “social science research on Chinese organizations.” Let us first delineate the boundary of this literature. Most of what is being surveyed here are those studies carried out by social scientists, especially those in sociology, political science, economics, and management research, published in social science journals or by academic presses, and focused on Chinese organizations broadly defined—those analyses and discussions that have implications for the organizational aspects of Chinese society. We pay particular attention to the more recent research activities, especially those in the last two decades, partly because this is the period when social science disciplines have provided important theoretical models and analytical tools for understanding the organizational phenomena, and partly because the transformation of Chinese society in the last three decades has greatly stimulated social research in this area.

Our survey is motivated by two general observations. First, formal organizations play a central role in the Chinese society. It is not exaggerating to say that contemporary China since 1949 has been *an organizational society*, where various aspects of political, economic, and social life have been organized by formal organizations, especially those of the state apparatus. Hence, the study of Chinese organizations provides a key to understanding different arenas of Chinese society. In the post-Mao era, the transformation of Chinese organizations has been at the center of the ongoing, fundamental institutional changes of Chinese society in the last three decades. Formal organizations are both the very economic, political, and social institutions being transformed and the basis for other institutions such as law, markets, and other governance mechanisms. That is, institutional transformation is first and foremost captured in organizational changes and innovation; at the same time, institutional legacies and historical imprinting are also inherited and renewed through forms and practice of formal organizations. In this light, organization research has much to offer for our understanding of Chinese organizations and Chinese society in general.

Second, there has been considerable accumulation of knowledge in the literature on Chinese organizations. In the last thirty years, social science studies of Chinese organizations have been salient in both scale (number of studies) and impact on our understanding of Chinese society, from patterns of inequality, reconfiguration of social groups, distribution of resources, and center-local relationships to the making of social movements. Moreover, a large number of studies have flourished in recent

years with distinctive theoretical logics and themes to address different aspects of the organizational phenomena. We note that not all studies reviewed here are commonly identified as belonging to the literature on Chinese organizations, nor did all these authors claim their analytical approaches as organizational analysis. We carve out this arena because many studies share the same subject matter—organizational phenomena—and/or they adopt, explicitly or implicitly, conceptual and analytical tools that can have close relevance to the field of organizational research.

Before we plunge into the specific studies in this literature, in this section we sketch the broad landscape of research on organizations and the connections among social science research, organization research, and the study of Chinese organizations.

In the English literature, the relationship between social science research and organization research has been a long, reciprocal one. In the United States, the study of formal organizations became an academic research field after World War II (Perrow 1986; Scott 2003). In the early days, studies of organizations drew heavily from different disciplines of the social sciences—the Weberian model of bureaucracy in sociology (Merton 1952), the role of interests and political coalitions in political science (Lindblom 1959; March 1988), and economic analysis of bureaucratic behaviors (Downs 1967), among others.

Over several decades of intellectual accumulation and evolution, organization research has developed a distinctive set of theoretical models, conceptual and analytical tools, and active research agendas, and organization research has become a distinct field of intellectual inquiry (Scott 2003). By now it has become a received wisdom that formal organizations have their respective structures, processes, and mechanisms, whose logics require distinct analytical models. Since the 1980s, the influence of theoretical paradigms in organization research in other social science disciplines has been keenly felt. For example, the concepts and explanatory logics developed in the sociology of organizations, such as institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977), population ecology (Hannan and Freeman 1977), and network analyses (Burt 1992), have been widely adopted by researchers in political science, education, and business management. Models of organizational analysis have been applied to the study of social stratification (Baron 1984) and social movement (Davis and McAdam 2005). In political science, organizational research provided a distinct analytical lens through which to better understand government decision making (Allison 1971) and the organizational basis of politics (March and Olsen 1989; Moe 1991, 1994). In economics Williamson's (1975, 1985) theory of transaction cost economics drew explicitly from the behavioral theory of organizations in the tradition of Simon, March, and Cyert (Cyert and March 1963; March and Simon 1958; Simon 1947). The new economics of industrial organizations also draws inspiration from classical studies of organizations by Weber (1946), March and Simon (1958), Barnard (1938), Dalton (1959), and Crozier (1964).

A central theme of this survey is that the study of Chinese organizations may benefit significantly from cross-fertilization between social science research approaches and the field of organization research. To highlight this theme, it is useful to make a distinction between the two terms: *the analysis of organizations* and *organizational analysis*. We use the phrase “the analysis of organizations” to refer to social science studies that treat, either directly or indirectly, formal organizations as the subject matter of research; we reserve “organizational analysis” to refer to theories or analytical tools developed in the field of organization research.

Allison's (1971) classic study of the Cuban missile crisis provided an excellent illustration of the distinction between the two. In analyzing decision-making processes in the Kennedy administration during the Cuban missile crisis, Allison employed and contrasted three distinct models: the rational model, the model of organizational processes, and the model of bureaucratic politics. The rational model, featured prominently in economic analysis, assumes that actors act rationally, with consistent goals, and in pursuit of efficiency in maximizing their goals. In contrast, the model of bureaucratic politics, an analytical lens characteristic of political science, emphasizes those factors that are relevant to political processes: multiple interests, bureaucratic bargaining, and coalition building. Finally, the model of organizational processes draws from the insights of organization theories and highlights those factors that are intrinsic to processes in formal organizations: bounded rationality, the satisficing principle, uncertainty avoidance, and rule-based behaviors. All three theoretical models help us understand different aspects of the processes and outcomes in this dramatic episode. In particular, Allison showed that organizational analysis provides a distinct lens that cannot be reduced to the subject matter of one social science discipline or another. Indeed, formal organizations are regulated by their particular routines, authority relationships, and internal design; all these are built on the codification of organizational learning experience, interest articulation, and adaptation to their environments over time. As such, their behavioral patterns are subject to organizational analysis.

Turning to the studies of Chinese organizations, we observed a parallel, but considerably delayed, reciprocal process in social science research on Chinese organizations. In the social science disciplines, the study of Chinese organizations has had a long tradition in sociology, political science, and economics. In the last decade, it became an active field of research in the business school tradition of organization research. In the early studies, social science disciplines provided rich theoretical and analytical tools in the study of Chinese organizations, with strong discipline imprinting. Occasional trespassing notwithstanding, for a long time research was characterized by disciplinary segmentation, in both subject matter and research topics. As we will review below, political scientists confined their attention to the political arena, such as government, policy making, and bureaucratic behaviors; economists focused primarily on industrial organizations, such as the structure and performance of industrial organizations (e.g., state-owned firms and township and village enterprises [TVEs]); and sociologists attended to the organization of workplaces as vehicles of social mobility and as bases of social life and activities. Although the burgeoning field of management studies borrowed conceptual frameworks from these disciplines (including psychology), management scholars have largely focused on business management and organizational culture in Chinese organizations or foreign-invested enterprises (e.g., joint ventures) in China.

In recent years, as China research moved from area studies to more discipline-based approaches, this situation has changed significantly. In particular, there has been significant infusion of both research topics and analytical tools across social science disciplines. Nowadays, as we will see, sociologists routinely study firm behavior, as well as the behaviors and promotion patterns in the Chinese bureaucracy, and political scientists draw on the economics of incentives and information to explain political institutions and processes. At the same time, economists have become interested in governance issues that involve both political and social institutions. These research activities give rise to cross-fertilization, as well as competing theoretical paradigms, in this diverse, loosely bounded literature.

In contrast, analytical tools and concepts developed in the field of organization research have only slowly, occasionally, and often implicitly been employed in social science research on Chinese organizations. Following our theme of the important role of organizational analysis, we will argue and demonstrate that this asymmetric relationship, especially the intellectual failure to treat firms, government agencies, and workplaces as distinct organizational phenomena with their own logics and behavioral patterns, has generated glaring gaps in our understanding of Chinese organizations and China's transformation.

Our survey does not aim for comprehensiveness; instead we are selective and topic oriented in order to highlight key issues and research activities on the organizational phenomena in Chinese society. Our goal is to identify major lines of research activities on Chinese organizations, the theoretical arguments, and the causal mechanisms. For exposition purposes, we organize our survey by the disciplinary fields—sociology, economics, political science, and management science—but throughout our discussion we will make cross-references to related studies in other disciplines. By comparing and contrasting studies across academic fields, we emphasize intellectual connections, bifurcations, or departures. Along the way, we point out the potential benefit of organizational analysis for the study of Chinese organizations in social science disciplines. While recognizing the impressive contribution of this literature, we also intend this review to be “critical” in the sense that we will be especially biased toward emphasizing the unsolved problems in this area and identifying intellectual gaps and lack of communication and accumulation in these research camps, with the hope that future efforts can overcome these barriers. Finally, we confine our review and discussion to studies in the English literature; we only occasionally make reference to studies in Chinese in order to illustrate selected issues.

The rest of the essay is organized as follows. First, we organize our survey of research activities on discipline-based arenas—sociology, political science, economics, and organization research—respectively. Second, we turn to one specific area—the rise and fall of TVEs as an organizational phenomenon—to evaluate and contrast analytical approaches, research styles, and their limitations across academic fields. Finally, we conclude our survey by offering our assessment and critique of the literature and by proposing a set of research agendas in the study of Chinese organizations.

The Sociology of Chinese Organizations

We begin with sociological studies of Chinese organizations. The “sociology of Chinese organizations” refers to those studies that are based on sociological research traditions, have identified social mechanisms, and typically have been conducted by sociologists. These studies tend to share similar topics (e.g., stratification, social inequality, and employment relationships) and similar research styles (based on empirical analyses of quantitative data). In the last two decades, a large number of studies by sociologists have been published in sociological journals, a testimony to the extent sociological studies of Chinese societies have been incorporated into the mainstream of sociological research.

Sociological approaches to organizations are predicated on the premise that formal organizations depend on and, at the same time, exert major impacts on the social structure in which they are situated. In an influential treatise on this topic, Stinchcombe (1965) elaborated at length the multifaceted

relationships between social structure and formal organizations in contemporary society. A key proposition in Stinchcombe's arguments is that the rise and decline of formal organizations—organizational form, practice, and interorganizational relationships—depend on the specific social and historical context of a society. This is because a society provides bases for organizations' survival and growth in terms of resources (human resources, skill, and know-how), legitimacy (ownership structures), and behavioral patterns (government regulations and cultural expectations), as well as opportunity structures (e.g., the rise of private sector or foreign direct investment in China in the post-Mao era). Broadly, from a supply point of view, government regulations, cultural expectations, and socialization and institutionalization processes channel individuals into different walks of life, affecting the differential rates of organizational success or failure.

Another insight of Stinchcombe's argument is the effect of historical context on organizational structures and practice. Drawing on his studies of the contrast between craft and bureaucratic organizations, and other studies in the literature, Stinchcombe showed the differentiating roles that historical legacies (legal systems, religious organizations, etc.) have played in different organizational structures and practices. This has been a recurrent theme in sociological studies of authority relationships and managerial strategies in organizations and industries (Bendix 1956; Guillen 1994; Hamilton and Biggart 1988).

Finally, Stinchcombe's arguments that formal organizations play a major role in shaping patterns of social stratification anticipated the wave of organization research centered on this theme since the 1980s. Stinchcombe argues that organizations act as stratifying mechanisms in educational institutions and organized dependency relationships in the workplace. Research since the 1980s has demonstrated the role of organizations in labor markets, gender inequality, and income disparity (for a review, see Baron 1984; and Baron and Pfeffer 1994).

More than forty years later Stinchcombe's propositions and discussions are as persuasive, refreshing, and relevant in our digital society today as before. As we shall see, all these themes fit Chinese society well and are echoed in studies of Chinese organizations. With these key insights in mind, we now examine research on Chinese organizations through the sociological lens.

As argued above, since the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949, major political, economic, and social activities have been organized by stable, formal organizations under the Chinese state. In the Mao era, all aspects of social life were organized on the basis of formal organizations in the planned economy—from educational opportunities, employment, family planning, salaries, and housing to retirement. In rural areas, peasants were organized into production teams, brigades, and people's communes. In this sense, most research on contemporary China speaks to various aspects of organizational phenomena. For example, Parish and Whyte 1978 and Whyte and Parish 1984, two comprehensive studies of urban and rural societies of the Mao era, devote much space to describing and documenting in detail the organization of workplaces in urban and rural areas, respectively, and analyze behaviors and practices on the bases of these organizational apparatuses.

Among the early studies of Chinese organizations, Walder 1986 is exemplary in combining the strength of the area studies characteristic of rich observations and sense making and the analytical power characteristic of social science research. In this study, Walder developed a "communist new traditionalism" model to explain political mechanisms in employment relationships in the Chinese

workplace. This model emphasizes the infusion of traditional practice, such as patron-client relationships and preferential treatments, into communist political control in the workplace in Maoist China. Central to this theme is an organizational analysis of dependency relationships of employees on local authorities, and how positive incentives exercised on the shop floor were used to induce political compliance. Walder's analysis demonstrated that the key to understanding political order in Maoist China lies in everyday practice in the workplace. These studies are especially remarkable given the fact that the empirical evidence was largely based on interviews with immigrants from the mainland to Hong Kong.

Seen through the lens of the sociology of organizations, these studies of Mao's China shared one common characteristic: the role of formal organizations was featured prominently in these studies, but organizational analysis was at best implicit. That is, researchers invariably emphasized the importance of the formal organizations and stable organizational arrangements, but they seldom applied concepts and tools developed in the sociology of organizations. This partly reflected the closed boundaries of discipline-based and area studies before the 1990s, where there was little communication between area researchers and discipline-based scholars, and between organizational sociology and other areas of sociology. Also, difficulties in access to Chinese organizations made it next to impossible to conduct in-depth sociological research on the internal workings of organizations, a characteristic of American sociology of organizations during this period of time (see below).

In the post-Mao era, along with China's gradual opening up to the outside world, scholars have much wider access to Chinese society and Chinese organizations. As a result, the area of China studies has flourished, as evidenced in the noticeable surge in the research publications in sociological journals (for a recent review, see Bian 2002). In American sociology, Nee's (1989, 1991) market transition theory developed explicit theoretical arguments on the consequences of the rise of markets on traditional redistributive system in China and stimulated a large number of studies of transition economies in China and other former state socialist societies. Research on Chinese organizations gained momentum in this intellectual context. In our review below, we group sociological studies of Chinese organizations along two major themes: (1) explorations of organizational transformation in China's transition economy; and (2) the organizational consequences of social stratification in the post-Mao era.

Understanding Organizational Transformation in China's Transitional Economy

Consistent with the earlier period, the study of Chinese organizations witnessed the infusion of multidisciplinary approaches. Of these, theoretical models and analytical tools developed in the sociology of organizations have played a larger role in the literature to better understand and explain organizational phenomena in the context of China's transition economy. Among sociological studies of Chinese organizations, three studies—Nee 1992, Walder 1995b, and Lin 1995—stand out in terms of their intellectual contribution and the distinctive mechanisms they identify.

Nee (1992) developed theoretical arguments on how the expansion of markets leads to competition between redistributive and market mechanisms and the organizational dynamics resulting from this competition, especially changes among state firms, collective firms, and private firms. Extending his market transition logic, Nee argues that those organizations that are closer to market transactions (i.e.,

private firms) are more likely to witness more rapid growth and enjoy competitive advantages relative to those governed by nonmarket mechanisms. Along with the expansion of markets, then, we should expect significant changes among different populations of organizations with distinct property rights relationships to the state and markets. In this light, Nee identified and discussed the significance of the hybrid forms of organizations in China's market transitions. In line with Williamson's transaction cost economics arguments, Nee conceptualized Chinese firms as taking actions in response to environmental constraints in order to minimize transaction costs. In this light, Nee highlights the importance of the hybrid form of organizations—firms with mixed property rights in China's transitional economy.

Nee 1992 is among the earliest sociological studies to directly address organizational changes among Chinese firms in the transition period. This study highlighted the hybrid form of organizations in China's transition economy and developed a clear theoretical logic on differential performances and survival among different types of organizations. Unfortunately, the multifaceted processes of change make the test of such theoretical ideas extremely difficult. For example, when we observe the continuing strength of state firms in their performance, does this mean that the role of political mechanisms is prevalent or that state firms also actively engage in and benefit from market competition or both? Or are other alternative mechanisms at play?

Observing the active role of local governments in China's transition economy and interventions in local firms, Walder (1995b) developed an imagery of local governments acting as the headquarters of a corporation and organizing economic activities of the local firms as its subsidiaries. He argued that financial incentives offered during the fiscal reforms in China are especially strong at the lower levels of the administrative jurisdiction: "[G]overnments at the lower levels are able to exercise more effective control over their assets than are governments at higher levels" (270). That is, as one moves down the administrative hierarchies the goals and interests of local governments are increasingly aligned with those of local firms, and the monitoring and controlling capacities of local governments are greatly strengthened. Moreover, because of their monopoly positions in the local jurisdiction, local governments are in a position to provide the kinds of advantages that no other type of owner can achieve. That is, at the lower levels of the administrative hierarchies in China, local governments have increasing capacities in monitoring and intervening in local firms' everyday activities within their jurisdiction. Hence, those so-called hybrid forms of organizations in rural China and the collective sector "are under a form of public ownership no different from the large urban state sector, except that government has clearer incentives and a greater ability to monitor firms and enforce their interests as owners" (266). In so doing, Walder developed a forceful argument that public organizations, facilitated by local governments, are the main driving force in economic growth.

Another area of active research is related to network research. Lin' (1995) called attention to, and developed theoretical arguments for, the importance of social networks in China's institutional changes. Focusing on one prominent village in North China, Lin uncovered dense social relations built around the key players. On this basis, he developed the "local socialism model," which emphasizes the role of stable social institutions. Lin argued that "local coordination is built upon [a] local, primarily kin, network. This network pervades and superimposes over a synchronized institution of economy, polity and society. The indigenous institution is based on the traditional Chinese family-village elements, decidedly unassociated or dictated by the principles of state socialism or market mechanisms" (310).

Lin's work identified network ties as an effective organizing mechanism in the village collective, with implications for other forms of governance.

The three studies outlined above addressed different mechanisms—markets, local governments, and network ties—in the organization of social and economic activities in China. In so doing, they treat Chinese organizations as the focus of analysis. They draw theoretical ideas from the economics of market competition, the economics of incentives, and sociological studies of social networks. But these studies approach these organizational phenomena with little reference to the literature in the sociology of organizations. For example, by focusing on market competition as the main driving force, Nee's study did not give adequate attention to the persistent role of nonmarket mechanisms and other aspects of organizational environments such as political protection or local governments' capacities in resource mobilization. Walder's model implicitly assumes that local governments behave like rational, economic actors, as if they were the CEOs of large corporations. Research on the bureaucratic phenomena has cautioned us that officials in those offices have their own objectives, which might not be consistent with those of local firms. Attending to these issues would significantly revise our conceptualization of the role of local governments.

In contrast, Guthrie (1997, 1999), Keister (1998, 2001, 2004), and Zhou et al. (2003) have produced studies that were largely motivated by or closely linked to research traditions in the sociology of organizations. These scholars explicitly drew from the sociology of organizations literature to guide their research and engage in a dialogue with the research issues in that literature. Based on his fieldwork in Shanghai, Guthrie's work focused on the transformation of state firms into market-oriented firms. Trained in the institutional tradition, Guthrie adopted an institutional approach that emphasizes the isomorphic behaviors among organizations in response to uncertainty. He used this theoretical model to explain the adoption of market-oriented strategies and managerial practices in Chinese firms, especially state-owned firms. Keister's research drew more broadly on theoretical ideas on interorganizational relationships in organization sociology and economic sociology to examine the formation and evolution of business groups and interfirm relationships within business groups. Zhou et al. (2003) examined interfirm contractual relationships and the mechanisms that underlie different aspects and phases of contractual relationships. The authors adopted a comparative framework to examine how different mechanisms—institutional isomorphism, social networks, and economizing transaction costs—affect contractual relationships between firms. Although all employed quantitative methods in their data analyses, these studies were nevertheless informed by extensive interviews and close observations in fieldwork.

In other, related areas, sociologists also studied changes in property rights and their effects on firm behaviors. Oi and Walder (1999) assembled a number of in-depth empirical studies on the variety of changes in property rights configurations in Chinese organizations. Chen (2004) studied how local institutions affected the formation of property rights in three regions in rural China. There are also a number of studies that examine the relationship between property rights configuration and firm behavior (Peng 2004; Zhou, Cai, and Li 2006). However, sociological research in this area has not gained momentum.

Organizational Consequences of Social Stratification

For a long time, the sociology of Chinese organizations was a by-product of research on social stratification in Chinese society. The central role of work organizations in one's life chances, especially in urban China, inevitably led research on social stratification and mobility to a focus on formal organizations; or conversely, most research on formal organizations was situated within the framework of social stratification research—examining and assessing changing patterns of social stratification in China's transition economy.

One important contribution of these studies, especially those of urban China, is recognition of the hierarchy of work organizations in urban China and their impact on life chances. Lin and Bian 1991 and Walder 1992 were among the early studies that developed explicit theoretical arguments and examined stratification consequences. Bian's study (1994) offered a comprehensive examination of the impact of work organizations on the welfare of urban residents under the state redistributive system. This framework has also been extended to examine changes and stability in the stratification order in China's transition economy (Bian and Logan 1996; Nee and Cao 1999, 2002; Walder 2003). More recently, Wang (2007) developed a broad and systematic study of "categorical inequality" based on stable social institutions in urban China. Political scientists have also shown some interest in "*danwei*" phenomena (Lu and Perry 1997; Solinger 1995), although the attention was more occasional than sustained.

Studies in this literature shared several characteristics. First, most studies focused on the determinants of personal income, where one's location in the work organization plays a key role. The choice of analytical focus appears to be a matter of convenience—it is easier to collect information on personal income in survey-based research—rather than based on a careful, theoretically informed research design. Second, these studies are confined to urban areas, for the simple reason that organizational hierarchy was most salient there. In contrast, this line of argument was absent in research on social stratification patterns in rural areas. It appears as if there was a total segmentation in terms of redistributive institutions and mechanisms between urban and rural areas. Third, these studies are typically survey based, using statistical methods and engaging in a dialogue with mainstream sociological research on social stratification in other societies. Subsequent studies have extended this literature into other areas. For example, Davis (1992) and Zhou (1997) examined patterns of job mobility in the post-Mao era to assess the direction and extent of institutional changes. Others have examined patterns of other economic benefits such as housing and other latent benefits (Bian et al. 1997; Shu and Bian 2003; Zhou 2004; Zhou and Suhomlinova 2000).

In the last two decades, studies of mobility and promotion patterns among managers and bureaucrats in Chinese organizations have developed a small but noticeable literature. In particular, two theoretical models were proposed in this literature. One is the dual-path model developed by Walder and his associates (Li and Walder 2001; Walder 1995a; Walder, Li, and Treiman 2000). The dual-path model argues that the political logic of the Chinese bureaucracy gave rise to two distinct career paths: one based on political screening that channels individuals into political careers and the other based on expertise criteria that channel individuals into professional careers. The two career paths are thus governed by distinct mechanisms, generating different career patterns and life chances. In contrast,

Zhou and his associates developed a model of political dynamics that emphasizes the role of shifting state policies and selection criteria across historical periods that generate fluctuating life chances for bureaucratic recruitment and promotions (Zhao and Zhou 2004; Zhou 1995, 2001). Bian, Shu, Logan (2002), and Cao (2001) have also conducted research in this area and developed similar arguments on the political dynamics (see also Zang 2001; and Cao 2001). We should also note that both political scientists and economists have shown strong interest in this area as well (for political science studies, see Lampton and Yeung 1986; and Li and Bachman 1989). Economists Li and Zhou (Li and Zhou 2005) developed a line of argument about “administrative achievement” incentives in the promotion of provincial leaders. This study distinguishes itself from sociological studies in the authors’ explicit consideration of incentive designs within the Chinese bureaucracy and quantitative data in testing these arguments. Overall, research in this area is characteristic of statistical analyses based on survey data, which show aggregate patterns across work organizations and over time. However, these studies are virtually silent on those mechanisms operating *within* organizations.

An understanding of the organizational phenomena in China has ramifications in other areas. Lee’ (1995) studied gender roles in division of work and authority relationships in workplaces in China’s fast-growing economic zones. Based on ethnographic research and close observations, Lee’s work provides a rich account of feelings, expectations, and life experiences on the shop floor. In a study of Guangzhou in the reform era, Lee (1999) showed that, departing from organized dependence in neotraditionalism, there was evidence of “institutional discontinuities which have deprived many SOEs [state-owned enterprises] of the delivery capacities crucial for sustaining paternalism, removed old constraints on managerial domination and fragmented the working class by engendering divisions and conflicts other than those prevalent under neo-traditionalism” (46). What are the organizational bases for these new patterns of employment relationships? Lee identified a set of mechanisms: the shifts from welfare paternalism to welfare commodification and familial dependence, as well as the ascendance of managerial power.

One area of particular interest for sociologists is the state-society relationship and the role of formal organizations in political dynamics. Organizational analyses also shed light on understanding social movement and collective action. In earlier works, anthropologist Skinner (1985) developed his model of hierarchical market structure in Chinese society and provided an interesting example of organizational analysis of economic transactions across rural localities. In particular, Skinner and Winckler’s (1969) discussion of policy cycles in rural China came closest to an organizational analysis. They examined the interactions between the implementation of government policies and peasants’ response that generated the pressures from the latter to cause frequent shifts in the former. Here the state was no longer a monolithic authority imposing its will on society; rather, the coupling between the two led to interesting dynamics that can be best explained by organizational analysis.

Zhou (1993) applies an organizational analysis of collective action in the Chinese context and developed theoretical arguments about the relationship between unorganized interests and collective action, and the role of “collective inaction.” Central to his argument is the role of institutional arrangements that paradoxically channel unorganized interests, diverse demands, and complaints to converge into collective action, and to be directed toward the state. Lee (1998) applied the concept of “collective inaction” to examine labor movements in Guangzhou in the post-Mao era. Zhao’s (1998)

study on the ecology of social movements demonstrated the role of the ecological organization of residential and work locations in generating distinct patterns of social interactions and mobilization.

Taking Stock

Now we come to our first stop to take stock and assess the state of the art in the sociological study of Chinese organizations. On the positive side, we note that there has been significant achievement over time in both the quantity and quality of studies of Chinese organizations. In terms of quantity, there has been a significant increase in the sheer number of publications in sociological journals, as we reviewed above. These studies have covered a variety of organizational phenomena and their implications for social inequality in China. In terms of quality, the level of sophistication and rigor in analytical skills, the quality of data being gathered and analyzed, and the clarity in conceptual and theoretical exposition have also improved significantly. Compared to early studies in this area, which were largely descriptive and confined to area studies, recent publications have been able to engage direct dialogue with mainstream research activities in the discipline.

On the other hand, this field has also experienced significant obstacles to future advancement. Our first observation is that, overall, *there is a lack of interaction between the study of Chinese organizations and the literature in the sociology of organizations*. Most research reviewed here did not explicitly draw from studies in the sociology of organizations. For example, studies of promotion in Chinese organizations have made no reference to a large number of studies in organization research and, as a result, have not benefited from the analytical concepts and research designs of that field. Our second observation is that, *in terms of research styles, there is a lack of close observation and sense making in the study of Chinese organizations*. Most studies in recent years have been based on surveys or long-distance observations. These studies are more explicitly theory driven and hypothesis testing, and are largely motivated by theoretical paradigms and research agendas in the English literature. This research style induces researchers to borrow from the literature rather than to embrace the more challenging task of making sense of what is really going on through close observation. As a result of such research designs, there is usually an absence of empirically grounded microlevel mechanisms and processes in these studies. Our third observation and most serious critique is the *lack of accumulation of knowledge in this area*. As the reader probably has already noted in our review and discussion above, there is a lack of connection among these studies, especially in terms of improving and refining analytical concepts and research designs and scrutinizing competing theoretical arguments. These problems are also common in other fields of research on Chinese organizations. We will return to these and other related issues in our conclusion.

Chinese Organizations in Political Science Research

Political science study of Chinese organizations has largely focused on political institutions, bureaucratic behaviors, and central-local governmental relationships. Although mostly motivated by discipline-based ideas and topics, these studies have examined, or bear relevance to, a variety of organizational phenomena in China. In recent years, political scientists have increasingly drawn their theoretical ideas and analytical concepts from the economic literature, especially in public choice and the new economics

of industrial organizations, employing analytical concepts and issues related to incentives, information, and resource allocation in political processes. Our review aims to highlight the connections between these studies and the literature of organization research.

Starting from the early totalitarian and authoritarian models, political scientists have long recognized the importance of formal organizations in political control, policy making, and economic development under state socialism. In the 1960s, the pluralist model of interest politics in American political science had a strong influence on the Soviet studies and gave rise to the studies of interest group politics in the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries, which identified the organizational bases (ministry, industry, and economic sector) on which interests were articulated in the political processes (Griffiths 1971; Skilling 1966). This reorientation from the authoritarian model to the pluralist model was extended to China studies soon after, especially fueled by the manifestation of chaos and conflicts during the Cultural Revolution. Tsou's (1986) study of the Chinese politics during the Cultural Revolution is in part an organizational analysis of the tensions and conflicts within the Chinese political apparatus.

It has been long recognized that the Chinese state relies on an elaborate bureaucracy for policy making, political control, and resource redistribution. As a result, the Chinese bureaucracy has attracted major research activities. Schurmann's (1968) early study called attention to the role of bureaucracy in China's nation building. Harding (1981) made a systematic study of the evolution of the Chinese bureaucracy and especially its associated problems between 1949 and the late 1970s. In sociology Whyte's early work (1973, 1980, 1985) provided the most elaborate discussion of the Chinese bureaucracy. In his exposition of Mao's critique of the bureaucratic problems, Whyte (1973) noted key differences between the Weberian bureaucracy and its counterpart in Mao's China.

One basic aspect of the Weberian ideal type that is modified by the Chinese Communists is the notion that bureaucracies contain a hierarchy of specialized posts to which people are appointed and promoted according to criteria of technical competence. The Chinese do not argue for organizations without hierarchy or without specialized office, but they do object to the emphasis on technical competence. They do not ignore questions of education and skills, but they also place strong weight on political purity. . . . The Chinese Communists do not subscribe to the notion of authority contained in the bureaucratic ideal type. They are fundamentally ambivalent toward rational-legal justifications of authority and toward the hierarchy and obedience entailed in large, complex organizations. (150–52)

In our view, an understanding of the Chinese bureaucracy in such a comparative framework remains a key task in the study of Chinese organizations.

The study of the Chinese bureaucracy began to flourish in the 1980s when China opened its doors to outside researchers. Between the 1980s and mid-1990s, there accumulated a respectful amount of literature on Chinese organizations, especially regarding the Chinese bureaucracy, as exemplified by a series of publications and edited volumes by Lampton and Lieberthal (Lampton 1987; Lieberthal and Lampton 1992; Lieberthal and Oksenberg 1986, 1988). What emerged from these studies was the "fragmented authoritarianism" model, which argues that "authority below the very peak of the Chinese political system is fragmented and disjointed" (Lieberthal and Lampton 1992, 8). The fragmented authority was attributed to the structure of the Chinese bureaucracy.

China's bureaucratic ranking system combines with the functional division of authority among various bureaucracies to produce a situation in which it is often necessary to achieve agreement among an array of bodies, where no single body has authority over the others. In addition, the reforms' decentralization of budgetary authority enabled many locales and bureaucratic units to acquire funds outside of those allocated through the central budget, which they could use to pursue their own policy preferences. (8)

The fragmentation was partly attributed to the larger reform context, which provided a less politically coercive, less ideologically driven atmosphere. As a result, bureaucratic bargaining, consensus building in the processes of policy making, and implementation come to the foreground of research. Among more elaborate and systematic studies of the Chinese bureaucracy, Yang 2004 focused on state building through bureaucratic reform in the post-Mao era in the midst of market expansion.

One particular issue is related to the effectiveness of authority relationships in the Chinese bureaucracy, especially in terms of relationships between policy making and bureaucratic implementation. Echoing the model of fragmented authoritarianism, Shirk (1993) provides an elaborate examination of the processes of bureaucratic bargaining and consensus building in policy-making processes in the reform era. She demonstrates the evolving authority relations that give discretion to government bureaucracies and the "reciprocal accountability" between leaders and the electorate, which imposes constraints on the hierarchical structure of bureaucratic bargaining and the characteristic "delegation by consensus" in making economic policies. What emerges from these discussions is a picture of a highly pluralistic political process involving extensive bargaining and incorporating different bureaucratic interests into decision making. This provides the key to understanding the incremental change characteristic of Chinese economic reform.

In a broader context, the issue becomes the relative strength of state capacities versus the resilience of autonomous social institutions in resisting state capacities. Scholars vary greatly in their assessment (Perry 1989), partly due to the areas of their analytical focus and partly due to evolving central-local government relationships over time. Shue's (1988) "honeycomb" model portrays modular structures in Chinese local areas in which local boundaries of villages and communities were segmented and fortified so as to resist the penetration of the state. In this light, state capacities and the reach of the state were greatly constrained. Friedman, Pickowicz, and Selden (1991) offered an elaborate empirical study on this account. They examined in detail the entrenchment of the socialist state in rural villages during the collectivization era but also the fact that traditional authority relationships and social institutions have succeeded in resisting the intrusion of formal organizations of the state. As they observed, "Villagers and their allies and patrons among officials also tried, as they had for many generations under various regimes, to dodge, deflect, and blunt the impact of demands detrimental to local interests and values. Those negative impacts gradually eroded the new state's popular legitimacy" (xv). They concluded that "an unintended consequence of the state's war on village culture and the peasant household economy was that villagers, expropriated of so much they treasured, clung more tightly to surviving, virtually sacred, household resources, from the home to the lineage to the marriage bond" (269). In a similar vein, Pearson (2007) reached similar conclusions in her study of Chinese regulatory reform in more recent years. She argued that the reforms have led to "extreme institutional fragmentation and an inability to imbue new governmental bodies with authority" (718). Even the

decentralization process, however, is not a one-way street. There were also organizational designs that increased the monitoring mechanisms from above. Huang (1995) discussed the role of administrative monitoring in the Chinese bureaucracy during the period of decentralization before the mid-1990s. Oi's (1989) study of state-peasant interactions in dividing harvests showed extensive interactions among government officials, local cadres, and villagers, which defies the modular forms of grassroots organization. The administrative decentralization of the 1980s led to significant changes in central-local relationships. O'Brien and Li (1999) showed that local governments were able to be selective in their implementation of policies; see also Edin 2003 for a study that focuses on the capacities of local governments in their daily work environments. Tsai (2007) examined the role of local institutions—kinship and local norms—in the provision of public goods in rural areas in the absence of a strong government presence.

The salient and active role of local governments in the reform era can no longer be explained in the traditional analytical framework of authority relationships in the Chinese bureaucracy. Wong (1991) examined the relationship between fiscal decentralization and central-local relationships in the early phase of the reform era. The role of local governments has become a focus of study in political science. Oi (1992) developed the “local state corporatism” characteristic of the intertwining between political authority and economy and between governments and business firms. Her key arguments are that the fiscal reforms, especially the organizational design in revenue sharing, provide local governments with incentives to promote economic development and facilitate private business enterprises. Oi's (1999) subsequent study of the development of rural industries provided empirical evidence on the role of local governments, under the new incentives, in promoting rural industries. She traced how changes in incentive designs (revenue sharing, performance evaluation) have led local governments to shift their behaviors from protecting collective enterprises to actively promoting private business. In a similar logic, Whiting (2000, chap. 3) offered an elaborate discussion of the incentives and organization in the Chinese bureaucracy. Based on her study of institutional changes in rural industry in the Yangzhi Delta region, her focus is on township governments—the lowest administrative level in the Chinese bureaucracy. She noted that as political leaders, township cadres pursued not only economic but also sociopolitical goals. However, competition among local governments for resources, investments, and other preferential treatments may inadvertently lead to suboptimal equilibria for local development. Focusing on the macroeconomic policies and government behaviors toward foreign investment, Huang (2003) offered the most serious critique of the incentive-distorted policies and behaviors among local governments that, in his view, had disastrous economic consequences. Zhou (2009) developed an organizational analysis of the collusive behaviors among local governments in their selective attention and effective resistance to policies and fiats from higher authorities.

Incentives for official behaviors are not only provided within the bureaucracy but also by the business community. Scholars also found evidence that local governments may be “captured” by business. Wank's (1999) study examined in some detail how local officials interact with and provide political protection for private business. However, as Pearson (2007) pointed out, given the fact that the major operators and regulators originated in the same predecessor organizations, it is difficult to parse whether business is “capturing” the regulator or the regulator is protecting its offspring.

Another active area of research in political science is village elections in rural China. Studies in this area have touched on various aspects of governance issues in the rise and evolution of village elections as an emergent institution. Because of space limitations, we will not review this literature. For a recent twenty-year retrospective, see O'Brian and Han 2009 and related commentaries in a special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary China* (18, no. 60 [2009]).

We now pause briefly to reflect on the connections between the political science research on Chinese organizations and those in the general organizational literature. We can now verify our earlier statement about the close connections between the two. The studies we have described have contributed to the study of Chinese organizations in that they highlighted the salient role of formal organizations—state bureaucracies, local governments, and other political institutions—in the organization of Chinese society and the ongoing transformation. These studies have emphasized the role of political interests and the organizational design of the Chinese bureaucracy, as well as their implications for bureaucratic negotiation, policy implementation, and state capacities in organizing and developing China. On the other hand, although there are many parallel themes and research topics between the two areas, these streams of research seldom intersect, let alone interact. From the vantage point of organization research, we highlight the characteristics of the political science research on Chinese organizations, especially noting the potential links between these recent studies and the literature on organization research in general.

First, recent studies of government behaviors in political science have been greatly influenced by the new economics of organizations. Reflecting the grand trend in political science, these studies have drawn heavily from the rational choice models, in which incentives, information, and strategic interactions are explicitly used in organizational analysis. For example, Oi (1992, 1999) explicitly drew theoretical ideas about incentives from the economics of organizations and about organizational response from behavioral theories of organizations to develop key propositions about the institutional bases of economic reform, and in particular local governments' response to changes in the incentive structures in the reform process.

Second, in contrast to the strong flavors of economic literature, there is little evidence that organizational analysis has provided input to political scientists' study of Chinese organizations. While there are many studies on decision making and implementation in organizations and on bureaucratic politics (Lipsky 1980; Pressman and Wildavsky 1984; Wilson 1989), researchers appear to have been unaware of this rich literature in the development of their theoretical and empirical studies of Chinese organizations. For example, the edited books by Lampton and Leiberthal barely made reference to this literature. One obvious consequence of this intellectual neglect is that the "Chinese characteristics" of these organizational phenomena have been unduly exaggerated and the similarities and parallels among bureaucratic organizations across societal contexts overlooked. A noticeable exception is Oi 1999, which made explicit reference to the behavioral theories of organizations in determining how officials in the Chinese bureaucracy respond to incentives and risks. Indeed, there are many parallels and similarities in bureaucratic behaviors and politics across societal contexts. Many studies of the central and local government relationships and the behaviors of local bureaucracies bear some resemblance to issues related to the analysis of loose coupling in organization research (March and Olsen 1979; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Weick 1976, 1982). The organizational literature elaborated

on the advantages and disadvantages of such an organization in local adaptation to complex and diverse environments, which would have provided a more informed discussion about the role of the Chinese state in economic reform. In a related area, theoretical ideas on incrementalism in “muddling through” in organization analysis (Lindblom 1959, 1979) also shed light on the characteristics of policy making and bureaucratic negotiations in China’s gradualist strategy of reform. State building, especially the centralization and bureaucratization of the state in the last decade, has reintroduced many new monitoring and sanctioning mechanisms into the Chinese bureaucracy, greatly enhancing state capacities. Without an understanding of organizational capacities, it is impossible to explain, let alone predict, the direction and pace of institutional change in China.

Finally, political science studies have a tendency to focus more on formal institutions and structures and less on informal and behavioral aspects of Chinese organizations. Most studies have paid much attention to formal policies and official statistics in an attempt to establish a causal interpretation of the phenomena at hand, but there have been few observations of bureaucracies at work. Even those studies based on extensive empirical research (e.g., by Whiting and Oi) had little to say about the behavioral aspects of local government officials—how they respond to local problem solving, multiple goals, and tasks. This gap in knowledge was largely caused by the difficulties of access to the Chinese bureaucracy. We should fully recognize the particular angles through which the Chinese bureaucracy is portrayed; that is, these studies portrayed the “official face” of the Chinese bureaucracy, which tended to be rational, responsive, and purposive. As a result, the actual behaviors and concerns of those who govern, and the interactions among them, were overlooked, leaving significant gaps in our knowledge about what is really going on in the Chinese bureaucracy. For example, researchers have emphasized the importance of economic growth as the main incentive behind local government officials’ behavior. However, a major concern of local government officials is timely promotion up the bureaucratic ladder, and the pressure is especially acute given age restrictions and rotation policies. As a result, local officials are extremely sensitive to bureaucratic fiat and policy shifts. Seen in this light, the behaviors of government officials are intricately linked to their supervising agencies, which in turn are linked to higher authorities. This issue has been recognized in some studies (e.g., Whiting 2000), but its implications have not been carefully examined either theoretically or empirically. In this regard, studies of government behaviors by Chinese scholars, especially studies of local government behaviors, have particular merits in providing many details on the behavioral aspects of the Chinese bureaucracy, which provides a critical and healthy balance to studies in the English literature. Unfortunately, a meaningful review of this literature is beyond the scope of this essay.

Economic Approaches to Chinese Organizations

In recent decades, the economics of information, transaction cost economics, and contract theory have provided important analytical tools and theoretical frameworks that stimulated active research on industrial organizations. These theoretical models and analytical tools were further applied to the study of transitional economies and public bureaucracies (Dixit 1996; Milgrom and Roberts 1992; Tirole 1986). Application of formal theories in the economics of organizations has provided significant advancement in analytical rigor and theoretical insights in the study of Chinese firms. In this section,

we first focus our discussion on some selected studies in this research style—those studies that are built on the new organization theory in economics, centered on issues such as information, incentives, and mechanism design.

Institutional Analysis of Organizational Form

Inspired by the distinct reform experiences of the transitional economies in China and Eastern Europe, and drawing on recent economic theory of organizations, Qian, Roland, and Xu have published a series of studies to compare and explain the implications of distinctive organizational forms for innovation, efficiency, adaptation to uncertainty, imperfect market competition, and mixed property rights characteristic of transitional economies (Qian, Roland, and Xu 1999, 2006; Qian and Xu 1998). In particular, they have modeled and contrasted the design attributes and relative advantages of two ideal types of organizational forms: U-form (unitary form) and M-form (multidivisional form). Qian, Roland, and Xu (2006) define “an M-form organization as one that consists of ‘self-contained units’ in which complementary tasks are grouped together,” whereas “a U-form organization is decomposed into ‘specialized units’ in which substitutable or similar tasks are grouped together” (369). The emphasis here is on the relative advantages and disadvantages of coordination under different institutional conditions. In particular, there is an obvious tradeoff between innovativeness and efficiency when the organizational design emphasizes attribute matching versus attribute complementarity. The authors showed that the U-form of organizations has advantages in realizing gains from specialization and scale economy; in contrast, the M-form organization achieves better coordination in attribute matching but suffers from poor coordination in “attribute compatibility” and has fewer gains in specialization. Moreover, the M-form of organizations is flexible in choosing between small-scale and full-scale experimentation, and is flexible in innovation in the face of uncertainty. From the vantage point of organizational analysis in organization-environment relationships, an obvious implication is that the U-form of organizations is advantageous in a stable environment with known technologies, but, because of the characteristic of grouping complementary attributes together, the M-form of organizations allows better local problem solving and organizational response to diverse, uncertain environments. In a similar spirit, Huang (1994) compared the reform experiences of China and the Soviet Union by considering the structure of bureaucracies in providing and processing information.

Starting from the premise that organizational forms affect the information structure of the organization and thus the way to coordinate changes, Qian, Roland, and Xu (1999) used this framework to explain the difference in reform experiences—an experimentation approach versus a big bang approach—between China and Eastern European countries. They attributed these differences to the historical legacies of distinct organizational structures in the planned economies: the U-form in Eastern Europe and M-form in China. They argued that the M-form is more flexible because it makes local experiments possible, contrary to the U-form, where this would give rise to major complications in the coordination of reform efforts. In a similar vein, Qian and Xu (1998) compared bureaucracy (soft budget constraint) and financial constraints (hard budget constraint) as screening mechanisms in selecting projects (i.e., organizational choices regarding innovation). Under circumstances of less uncertainty, bureaucratic screening allows fewer parallel projects, hence less waste in replication.

But multiple agencies and fragmented bureaucratic interests may generate organizational forms and practices that are suboptimal.

This line of research has several merits. First, by formalizing these ideas and intuitions, these studies are able to clarify the conditions under which different organizational forms have relative competitive advantages. And they also yield insight into the bases and limitations of bureaucratic intervention and shifts between hierarchies and markets. Second, these ideas have direct implications for understanding organizational reform in China. To illustrate, let us extend this set of ideas to consider the recentralization of authority and resources in the Chinese bureaucracy in recent years.

The centralization efforts are characteristic of strengthening vertical control through specialized agencies (e.g., ministries). The immediate implication, to borrow the analytical framework outlined above, is an emphasis on the grouping “attribute matching”—agencies of the same function were grouped together through a vertical link (of the typical functional form of organizations). In contrast, territory-based local governments are characteristic of “attribute complementarity,” which involves the matching and coordination of various attributes at the local level for local problem solving. In other words, the vertical and horizontal (local) lines of authority resemble the U-form and M-form of coordination, respectively. Take, for example, township governments. In the reform process, various functions—taxation, land management, and so on—were taken away from township governments, stripping complementary attributes from local governments and regrouping them along functional lines. This shift in reform strategies has greatly reduced the ability of local governments to solve problems and respond to crises. In contrast, the people’s commune—the predecessor of the township government—was largely an M-form organization, in which different, complementary functions were grouped under the authority of the commune government. Much is to be learned by revisiting these alternative institutional forms of governance through organizational analysis. Huang (1994) compared the organizational arrangements of the Soviet Union and China for information collection and processing and their implications for the different reform experiences of the two.

These discussions parallel studies of “loose coupling” in the organization literature, as we outlined above. *Loose coupling* refers to the internal organizational practice that keeps only loose coupling between an organization and its environment, between symbols and substance. An organizational lens emphasizes the relationship between an organization and the complex environments it encounters and the pitfalls of misadaptation. Organization theorists have argued that loose coupling allows an organization to be flexible in responding to different environments and in developing local knowledge to manage uncertainty. It seems that cross-fertilization across these two areas may lead to a better understanding of organizational forms and institutional changes.

Centralization, Decentralization, and Federalism

On the theme of central-local government relationships, Qian and Weingast (1997; see also Montinola, Qian, and Weingast 1995) developed a model of “federalism, Chinese style” to explain the reform strategies and success of China’s transformation. Again, the line of inquiry explicitly draws from “the new theory of the firm” in economics, which shows “how firm institutions and governance structures can be structured so that, in interacting with the market, they align incentives of managers

with the interests of shareholders” (1997, 84). The analytical focus of the “federalism, Chinese style” model is on the relationship between the central government and local governments. The starting point is the recognition that “an economic system faces a fundamental dilemma: not only does it depend on the political system for specifying and enforcing property rights and contracts, but it also depends on the political system to protect the market from political encroachment” (1997, p. 79). In their view, the model provides a solution to this dilemma by using “federalism” as a commitment to preserving market incentives. Federalism also imposes hard budget constraints, which facilitates market disciplines (Qian and Roland 1998). Montinola, Qian, and Weingast identified five conditions in their model: a binding and delineated scope of authority; local governments have primary authority over the economy in their jurisdictions; central government is effective in policing market transactions across local boundaries; hard budget constraints; and institutionalized durability of the allocation of authority and responsibility.

According to the authors, in such a federalist system, the central government is restrained, or self-disciplined, but still effective in maintaining monetary policies and imposing hard budget constraints, policing competition among local governments: “Central to the success of market-preserving federalism is the element of political durability built into the arrangements, meaning that the decentralization of power is not merely at the discretion of the central political authorities” (Montinola, Qian, and Weingast 1995, 53). In their view, such a new political system was emerging in China’s reform process, one that “provides considerable political protection for China’s reforms, including limits on the central government” (52), and is a market-preserving mechanism through the decentralization of power.

The key question is whether such a “credible commitment” is credible. The authors outlined the following conditions: “First, the central government must be given sufficient resources to police shirking by lower governments; second, the lower governments must police central government abuse of its authority by retaliating in concert against abuses” (Qian and Weingast 1995, 90). And they seemed optimistic, citing evidence on the sustainability of this organizational design. But this line of research was published around mid-1990s, when the central government was the weakest, in both authority and resources, relative to the capacities of local governments. Since then, however, we have witnessed significant recentralization of both decision-making authority and resources in the hands of the central government, raising serious questions about the sustainability and limitations of the model of “federalism, Chinese style.”

As we have shown, economic studies of Chinese organizations have drawn heavily from recent developments in the economics of organizations, which significantly enhanced the analytical rigor. These studies also are normative in nature and employ highly stylized formal modeling. One characteristic of the formal modeling research style is that models thus developed are built on explicit assumptions, situated in a particular analytical framework, which allows selected attention to a particular mechanism design (Mookherjee 2006). Some studies, for example, focus on adverse selection but assume away communication costs within organizations. Others focus on distinct organizational forms regarding their tradeoffs between efficiency and adaptability but put aside organized interests associated with such forms. Therefore, one needs to attend carefully to these assumptions and analytical frameworks in order to understand the implications and limitations of such models.

Empirically Based Economic Research

In contrast to the normative, formal modeling style of research, another, distinct literature is largely based on empirically grounded economic studies of Chinese organizations. Studies in this literature have examined various aspects of Chinese organizations: the strategies and trajectories of reform in Chinese firms (Naughton 1996), the evolution and performance of state-owned firms (Jefferson and Rawski 1994, 2002; Jefferson et al. 2000; Rawski 1995), and the rise and characteristics of the management class (Groves et al. 1995), among other topics. In contrast to the prevailing normative, formal modeling style in mainstream economics, scholars in this group showed great familiarity with both the context and the ongoing processes of change, which informed their analysis and sense making. And their studies adopted a more contextualized approach, sensitive to the particular institutional context and historical legacies; in so doing, they provided a much richer account of the Chinese organizations under transformation.

A once active area of research in economic studies of Chinese organizations was the rise and performance of township and village enterprises (TVEs), where we see the intersection of formal modeling and empirical research in economics, as well as the interaction of research activities among multiple disciplines in the social sciences. In the next section, we will focus on the study of TVEs by researchers in multiple disciplines and will compare and contrast different research styles and approaches across academic fields.

An Illustration: Multidisciplinary Research on TVEs

To illustrate our critique and contrast different analytical models across disciplines, we now focus on one particular area: research on township and village enterprises (TVEs). Our choice of this particular field is based on several considerations. First, the importance of TVEs—as a unique organizational form, its historical legacy and its relationship with local governments and village collectives, and especially its spectacular performance but unexpected demise—has made it a fascinating case for scholarly inquiry. Second, this is an area that has witnessed active research from multidisciplinary perspectives, as scholars in sociology, political science, management science, and especially economics have all shown a strong interest in accounting for the TVE phenomenon; thus, the state of the art facilitates a closer comparative assessment. Finally, the fact that TVEs, as a particular organizational population, experienced a spectacular rise and fall, especially its dramatic collapse in the mid-1990s, makes it a strategic focus of analysis and an attractive subject for more definitive assessments in discipline-based approaches to Chinese organizations. Indeed, this episode raises significant questions about the ways social scientists study Chinese organizations.

Of the various Chinese reform experiences, TVEs have received great attention among scholars across multiple disciplines. This academic interest is well warranted. First of all, the rapid rise and spectacular performance of the TVEs played a significant role in China's economic takeoff. Consider the statistics.

In 1978, 78% of national industrial output came from state-owned enterprises (SOEs); by 1993 that percentage had sunk to a 43% level, with nonstate enterprises providing 57% of total production. The

most dynamic segment in the nonstate sector is rural enterprises (Xiangzhen qiye), which accounted for 46% of the national industrial output in 1993, up from 9% in 1978. Within the rural sector, the township and village enterprises (*xiangcun qiye*), or TVEs, account for about three-quarters of rural industrial output, or more than one-quarter of the national total. (Che and Qian 1998b, 1)

In other words, the success of the TVEs holds the key to understanding China's takeoff in the early phase of the economic reform.

Moreover, TVEs can be seen as a distinctive organization population, with distinctive ownership configurations, behavioral patterns, and institutional environments. As is well known, the TVEs were largely collectively owned, and their chief management teams were appointed or sponsored by the local governments. As an organizational form, TVEs were characteristic of vaguely defined property rights and subject to multiple claims by local governments and collective authorities, as well as local residents (villagers). Compared to state-owned firms, they were also in less advantageous positions with regard to scale, technology, and capacities for resource mobilization.

Thus, the TVE phenomenon and its success present a puzzle. How do we explain TVEs' great success in the context of their unfavorable ownership structure and institutional environment? Obviously, the TVE phenomenon presented a challenge to "standard property rights theory" in economics. As Naughton (1994) put it, "The surprising thing about TVE's is not that they function without clearly specified property rights, but rather the fact that local government ownership turns out to be a fairly robust ownership form" (268). Since the early 1990s, much of the literature has sought to develop explanations to solve this puzzle.

Scholars in one camp—often labeled the convergence school—argue that the organizational form of the TVEs resulted from an organizational response to imperfect institutional conditions for market competition. Because of the transitional characteristic of the Chinese economy, a firm faced multiple institutional environments, especially the coexistence of a strong state and imperfect market conditions. In sociology Nee (1992) developed this line of argument, arguing that, in transitions to markets, mixed property rights involving both local governments and local collectives gave TVEs advantages in adapting to multiple demands on the TVEs and increased their capacities in resource mobilization. As Nee wrote:

The transition economy, characterized by weak market structures, poorly specified property rights, and institutional uncertainty increases the relative cost of redistribution even while rendering costly market transactions. This characteristic condition of partial reform creates an institutional environment in which hybrid forms enjoy a transaction cost advantage over alternative governance structures. . . . A continuing shift from redistribution to markets, however, induces change in the comparative costs of governance. As market institutions become more dominant in the transition economy and as the institutional foundation of a market economy is incrementally constructed, these parameter changes result in a relative increase in the cost of hybrid governance structures and reduction in the cost of transacting for private firms. (4)

This line of argument put its emphasis on the role of market disciplines and saw the vague property rights associated with TVEs as a transitional organizational phenomenon. That is, in competitive

markets, mixed property rights were less advantageous than well-defined private property rights, which better fit market mechanisms. Therefore, with improvement in market institutions, these firms will eventually “converge” toward clearly specified property rights (for a forceful review of this approach, see Woo 1999).

On the other side of the debate, scholars have tried to explain the puzzle by considering the advantages of the TVEs in their adaptation to their institutional environments. While they also agree that the distinctive forms of the TVEs resulted from organizational adaptation to their environments, they attributed TVEs’ success to the role of local governments and social institutions, in their capacities in local problem solving in (1) more effective monitoring mechanisms, (2) long-term contracting, and (3) protection from the predatory state. We highlight some of the studies below.

In an earlier, tentative attempt, economists Chang and Wang (1994) investigated different dimensions of ownership in the TVEs to look for answers. They argued that the issues that confront private firms in a market economy differ from those that TVEs face in China’s planned economy. They showed that while local governments may be the key decision maker in the TVEs, local citizens were the main beneficiaries (in their rights to income). In their view, such an ownership configuration reflected the institutional conditions in China: TVEs as an organizational form provided advantages in resource mobilization, and in creditable commitment embedded in local citizens’ ownership. Their model gives prominence to the role of both local governments and local citizens. They also highlighted the role of technology and employment in TVE governance, relative to private firms.

To address the puzzle of the ambiguity in property rights in the TVEs, Weitzman and Xu (1994) suggested that the success of TVEs may be attributed to its ability to solve internal organizational problems: “The significance of ownership interacts in a critical way with the ability to solve efficiently internal organizational problems without formal rules, which may perhaps be treated as more or less culturally given in many relevant cases” (139). In this argument, if a society has the characteristic of high cooperation and trust, “then, without formal ownership, parties may still be able to invest in the relationship or to lock together. In this case, it may not be necessary to have a well-defined owner with a clear-cut right to exclude some people from accessing the asset” (140).

Other studies placed the role of local governments at the center of their explanation. Che and Qian (1998b) argued that “the community government’s involvement in TVEs helps overcome the problems of state predation and underfinancing of private enterprises”; moreover, it helped impose greater budget constraints than state-owned enterprises did, giving TVEs particular advantages in adapting to the institutional environment. Further, Che and Qian (1998a) argued, “Because ‘local government ownership’ integrates local government activities and business activities, local government may better serve the interests of the national government, and thus local government ownership may credibly limit state predation, increase local public goods provision, and reduce costly revenue hiding.” The formal modeling also allowed them to offer explicit conditions for the TVEs’ success: “TVEs are more likely to disappear when the government experiences an increase in monitoring costs or an increase in private benefits (say, from pursuing its political agenda) and when the entrepreneur has more wealth” (17). Of various economic studies, Che and Qian’s work stands out in its explicit effort to derive conditions for the TVEs’ advantages and disadvantages through comparative statics analysis under different institutional environments (see also Che and Qian 1998a).

Sociologists have also paid particular attention to TVEs. In particular, Walder (1995b) developed theoretical arguments that treat local governments as the headquarters of local firms within their jurisdiction. The core argument, as Walder put it, is an organizational analysis. Here Walder drew from the economics of incentives to argue that the decentralization of the Chinese government gave local governments incentives to promote local firms, and to provide monitoring incentives to ensure their management and growth. That is, governments acted as if they were the headquarters of the local firms within their jurisdictions and, in so doing, solved the agency problem that plagued the state-owned firms in the Chinese economy. Oi (1999) developed a similar line of argument and extended this logic to the private sector. That is, fiscal reform and decentralization of administrative authority within the Chinese bureaucracy gave local governments the incentive to actively promote private firms in their jurisdiction. Lin (1995) also shed light on the role of social networks in the rise of TVEs, especially in the relationship between village leaders and government officials.

In the study of TVEs, theoretical explanations were rich and diverse, but empirical tests were relatively thin. Peng (2001) provided a rigorous empirical assessment in his analysis of firm performance using data on SOEs and township-government-owned firms, as well as village firms in a municipal area in 1993. He found that both township and village enterprises outperformed SOEs and that the scale of township-village governments increases productivity, despite weaker monitoring capacities because of the scale. On this basis, Peng offers two revisions: "First, TVEs had fewer agency problems, not due to more effective direct bureaucratic monitoring, but due to more effective indirect market monitoring. . . . Second, local government's external borrowing power from the state bank better explains the softness of budget constraints on SOEs. Internal cross-subsidizing within the local state corporations is probably limited and more calculated when it happens" (1365). He concluded that "contrary to the local state corporatist approach, which attributes TVE success to closer bureaucratic monitoring, the market discipline approach would argue that bureaucratic monitoring of managers is not only ineffective given the large corporate size, but may even be counterproductive because it provides the managers with excuses for making losses and bargaining for subsidies and loans" (1351). In another study, Peng (2004) argued that informal institutions in the form of kin solidarity and kin trust allowed protection of the property rights of private entrepreneurs and reduced transaction costs during the early stages of market reform, when formal property rights laws were ineffective and market institutions underdeveloped.

Despite eloquence, sophistication, and cautious qualifications, however, none of these studies foresaw or was able to explain the dramatic concluding chapter of the TVEs as an organizational population in China: in a short period of a few years, TVEs as an organizational population disappeared. The disappearance was both dramatic (hundreds of thousands of TVEs were being turned into private firms or closed doors) and uniform (the same fate took place across different regions, different administrative jurisdictions, and different types of products).

In contrast to the heated debate on the spectacular economic performance of the TVEs in the literature, scholars have been largely mute on the equally dramatic demise of the TVEs in the late 1990s. There are studies of the privation processes (Li and Rozelle 2003), but few have examined the causes of the TVEs' demise. Chang, McCall, and Wang (2003) belatedly reported an empirical study that shows that in panel data of 80 TVEs between 1984 and 1993, managerial incentive contracts do

not have a significant effect on firm performance; rather, “Performance is significantly better under ownership forms with better-defined property rights than under community ownership, even when the latter is supplemented with managerial incentive contracts” (321; see also Kung and Lin 2007).

How do we explain the dramatic fate of the TVEs? In what ways can theoretical and empirical studies help shed light on this phenomenon? Let us start by eliminating some common explanations and speculations in the existing literature. First, the drastic changes in such a short period of time can hardly be attributed to sudden changes in market conditions. Although there was a serious economic recession in major world economies in the early 1990s, these TVEs covered a wide range of products, targeting both domestic and international markets. Thus, one would expect considerable variation in the fate of TVEs situated in different market segments. Second, even assuming that TVEs experienced the similar environment of an economic recession, one cannot explain the uniformity of such changes across regions and economic areas as spontaneous actions resulting from the independent, rational decisions of local governments that decided to cut their losses by abandoning TVEs. Indeed, if we treat local governments as if they were the “quasi owners” of the TVEs, as some theoretical models suggest, we would expect much more variation in fate of TVEs across regions and over time, in patterns that were similar to those in the private sector. Third, one cannot argue that the TVEs’ disappearance was due to improvement in the condition of competitive markets that had made TVEs no longer advantageous compared to private firms. Market conditions had improved during this period of time, but this improvement was by no means significant and uniform enough to have induced such dramatic changes. Finally, the vulnerability of the TVEs in this episode also seriously challenges the proposed merits of TVEs in local problem solving and resource mobilization, compared to either state-owned firms or private firms.

In short, the demise of the TVEs cannot be explained away by external economic or market conditions, rational decisions by local governments-as-owners, or changes in the relative competitive advantages among different types of firms. Instead, answers must lie elsewhere. In our view, the drastic and uniform experiences of the TVEs reflect, above all, a political process enforced by the bureaucratic apparatus of the local governments. It was the local governments that oversaw the processes of privatization. The death and burial of the TVEs were executed by the very local governments that “owned” or sponsored them.

With much hindsight, we can now raise a series of issues using the lens of organizational analysis. The key issue, here, is the role of local governments. Almost all theoretical discussions explicitly or implicitly assume that local governments act as if they are rational, unitary owners. From this premise, one may logically infer the benefits of local government-as-owner in monitoring, resource mobilization, concerns for efficiency, and political protection. But this assumption is by no means realistic for several reasons. First, theories of bureaucracy have long recognized that bureaucracies are political coalitions with multiple interests and multiple goals. In this sense, TVEs and local firms face local governments with different interests and demands. Not all of them acted rationally, nor did they all care about promoting local development. Second, local governments—specifically, the township governments—are not merely “community governments” in the local jurisdiction, as some economists claimed. Rather, they are first of all part of the state administrative apparatus, and governed by incentive designs within the Chinese bureaucracy. As Peng (2001) noted, “[T]ownship

government is more integrated with the state bureaucracy than with local community” (1365). This recognition drastically alters some key claims in the existing literature. For example, as officials with career concerns within the bureaucracy, they cared more about administrative fiats than the interests of local firms. Moreover, the administrative rotation system was such that chief township government officials usually stayed in the same position for only three to five years. With such a short time horizon, one can hardly expect that they had in mind the long-term prospects of the TVEs.

This recognition also raises questions about the nature of “ownership” or the monitoring role of the local governments. It is true, as many studies have suggested, that local governments played an active role in protecting local TVEs from the predatory state in resource mobilization and local problem solving. But at what cost? Only belatedly did research reveal that firms with better-defined property rights outperformed firms with “local community government ownership” even with managerial incentives (Chang, McCall, and Wang 2003). There is also evidence that a large proportion of TVEs were poorly managed, suffered chronic losses, and survived only by devouring their remaining collective assets. Finally, research did not pay serious attention to the considerable variation among the TVEs, especially the fact that a large number of them operated as private firms, with the “red cap” strategy (Woo 1999).

The preceding discussions also raise two issues about the methodologies with which social scientists approach Chinese organizations in general and TVEs in particular. First, there is a lack of close observation of microprocesses that take into consideration the actual behaviors of local officials, entrepreneurs in terms of incentives, and career concerns at the individual level. Among the large number of studies of TVEs, most were based on official statistics and theoretical models developed in the West with scant empirical observations of what was really going on these TVEs! The problems that TVEs experienced, as outlined above, were not deliberately concealed from researchers. But they seldom entered researchers’ purview because most studies have focused on theoretical modeling based on “first principles” or the analysis of quantitative data.

Second, the “selection bias” in theoretical modeling is another culprit. Theoretical arguments were largely post hoc justifications that drew on the existing literature developed from economic theories of incentives, especially regarding the monitoring role of the local government. They conventionally assumed that the local government acts as a unitary owner with the goal of the long-term interest of the firm. For example, Che and Qian (1998a) focused on resource mobilization and political protection under the conditions of “imperfect institutional environment.” Other important issues, such as incentives of government officials and competing interests among parties to ownership, are assumed away in their economic analysis. As another example, the argument that ambiguous property rights allow for mobilization of resources is sensible. But the cost associated such ambiguity has not been examined in an integrated analytical framework. Similarly, many scholars highlighted the importance of fiscal reform that provided incentives for local governments to promote local economic growth. On the other hand, the costs of local governments in arbitrary interference, diversion of collective funds, and losses due to the pursuit of short-term “administrative achievement” have not seriously entered the balance book in researchers’ assessments.

Looking Ahead: Emerging Research Agendas

Retrospectively, social science research on Chinese organizations has evolved considerably over the last three decades, partly propelled by developments in research paradigms in social science disciplines and partly fueled by the great transformation of Chinese society. In the early days, studies in this area had strong imprints of the traditional, discipline-based division of labor: sociologists tended to pay particular attention to social organization of the workplace, family, and social welfare, and workplace-based social inequality; political scientists focused more on political institutions such as government agencies, policy making and implementation, and central-local government relationships; and economists centered their research focus on industrial organizations. Over time, as we have noted, common themes emerge across these disciplinary boundaries. First, the role of organizational mechanisms, such as incentives, organizational environments, and interactions among different types of organizations—local governments and firms, state regulation and firm performance, principal-agent relationships—permeate these studies. Second, the subject matter of different scholars has broken traditional discipline-based boundaries: nowadays sociologists study industrial organizations and government behaviors, political scientists study social institutions, and economists theorize about political design. Research on Chinese organizations has benefited from such cross-fertilization of multidisciplinary approaches.

What have we learned from the literature of social science research on Chinese organizations? In discussing the role of local governments in economic development, political scientist Oi (1992) argued, “There is no inherent reason why only individuals, as distinct from governments, can be entrepreneurs. Similarly, there is no inherent reason why secure property rights will be an effective incentive only if they are assigned to individuals” (100). Indeed, as Coleman (1974) observed, formal organizations have played a central role in contemporary societies: “It is the corporate actors, the organizations that draw their power from persons and employ that power to corporate ends, that are the primary actors in the social structure of modern society” (49).

On the other hand, the shift of analysis from individuals to formal organizations introduces an entirely new set of issues, both theoretical and analytical, which calls for new theoretical focuses and analytical approaches, especially giving prominence to the role of organizational analysis. Unlike individuals, formal organizations consist of multiple individuals with different interests and experiences. They also have stable routines and structural arrangements to coordinate activities across departments or product lines and incentive designs to induce organizational behaviors. Formal organizations also have their distinct histories and experiences, which that are subject to collective interpretation, sense making, and experiential learning. Indeed, an array of issues related to organizational design, such as coordination, information asymmetry, incentive design, and employment relationships, must be taken into consideration before we can satisfactorily explain the role of formal organizations—private firms, local governments, and other corporate bodies and their relationships—in China’s transitional economy.

The key lesson emerging from our survey is that organizational analysis provides a distinctive lens through which to better understand Chinese organizations and China’s transformation. Taking organizational analysis seriously will significantly improve our theoretical explanation and analytical

power. Starting from this premise, we now make more general observations and comments on those issues and areas that need improvement in social science research on China in general. The issues identified below also provide clues to the emerging agenda in the study of Chinese organizations.

First, *there is a lack of interaction between the study of Chinese organizations and the literature in organizational research*. Most studies in the social sciences did not explicitly adopt theories and analytical models in organizational analysis, nor did their studies engage in a serious dialogue with research issues and activities in the field of organization research. For example, studies of promotions in Chinese organizations made almost no reference to numerous studies in the organization literature, nor were these analyses focused on those mechanisms that are central in organization research (e.g., organizational demographics, vacancy chains, etc.). Rather, these studies emphasized the role of the external political context, which affects the internal operation of formal organizations. This is unfortunate because organizational analysis can be readily applied to social phenomena in Chinese organizations, which can significantly elevate the sophistication of conceptualization and analytical strength in this area. For example, analytical models and tools in organization analyses can be extended to shed light on issues such as dual controls in Chinese organizations, relationships between firms and regulatory authorities, multiple bases of legitimacy in property rights, mechanisms of interfirm relationships, and government behaviors in extrabudgetary resource extraction, to name a few.

Second, there is a *lack of accumulation of knowledge in this area*. This partly results from the lack of communication across academic fields and is partly due to the lack of integration of the research community in China studies. There are some noticeable exceptions, such as the body of literature on fragmented authoritarianism and TVEs. But overall, as the reader probably has noticed in our review of these studies, there were few studies that consciously built on previous studies. In the sociology of organizations, for example, Walder's new traditionalism model has not been carefully scrutinized or formulated for empirical testing, nor has Nee's model of organizational dynamics in the transition period. Even in the literature on promotion patterns in organizations, theoretical models developed in this field have not guided subsequent research in terms of rigorous empirical scrutiny. One important contributing factor of this state of the art is that there is a lack of intellectual community in China studies. Scholars were trained in diverse fields, professionalized into segmented research traditions, situated in different intellectual streams of ideas, and not integrated into a unified literature. Another contributing factor, in our view, is the lack of a critical mass due to the limited size of the intellectual community in this area.

Third, *there is a glaring gap in our knowledge about the internal processes in Chinese organizations*. From the large number of studies reviewed above, we have learned a lot about formal attributes in Chinese organizations and macropatterns, but we know little about the behavioral aspects within organizations. Take, for example, two areas of active research on Chinese organization.

The first is *the role of networks*. A large number of studies in recent years examined the role of social networks in labor markets (finding a job), in bridging interorganizational relationships, and in managing organization-environment relationships. But most studies spent a large amount of time and attention on collecting quantitative data but little effort in *understanding* (hence explaining beyond commonsense) microprocesses in a systematic manner. As a result, we do not know much about *how* these networks work and *under what conditions* they are chosen, activated, or bypassed. The second is

patterns of promotion. As our survey shows, by now several studies have shown patterns of promotion in organizations at the macrolevel, thanks to the accumulation of a series of large-scale surveys. However, we know remarkably little about how the processes of promotion or other types of mobility operate *within* an organization. How does opportunity interact with social networks? How is loyalty weighted in organizations? How are criteria formulated and implemented?

This is in sharp contrast to the earlier studies of organizations in American sociology in which careful and in-depth fieldwork and close observations provided a solid empirical foundation for understanding organizational phenomena. These early studies are among the best in the sociological tradition of empirical research. Gouldner's (1964) study of authority relationships in a mining company challenges the conventional view of organizational rules as instruments of efficiency in the Weberian bureaucracy. Instead, Gouldner found that formal rules are often used as a substitute for close supervision, that is, for avoidance of conflicts. Blau's (1955) work on two government agencies revealed flexibilities in rules in adapting to local circumstances and the injection of employees' subjective evaluations. Finally, a study by Crozier' (1964)—a French sociologist—involved observation and study of two French bureaucracies and detailed bureaucratic practice and management styles in the French context. In contrast to Gouldner and Blau, Crozier found strict reporting rules, rigidity. He concluded that rules are used to avoid conflicts and as protection from arbitrary decisions by managers. These studies are exemplary in combining clear theoretical logics and rich empirical evidence to develop a powerful sociological analysis, linking microdynamics to major issues of contemporary sociology. As Blau (1955, v) put it, "By taking pains with details, we hope to acquire the systematic knowledge needed for the scientific analysis of the important problems of modern society." We believe that this remains the ultimate goal in the social science study of formal organizations.

We have also learned a great deal from comparative and historical studies of organizations in the early period. Bendix (1956) showed the importance of societal environments in authority relationships in organizations and industries by contrasting managerial ideologies between market views and Soviet ideologies, and between two models of industrialization in Great Britain and Russia. The need to justify industry before the public in the early stages of the industrialization led to the style of early management theory. This recognition calls attention to the importance of ideology and culture in understanding organizational and managerial practice. These ideas seem especially relevant, as a baseline, to examinations of the way Chinese organizations are shaped in their response to historical legacies and the impact of globalization.

Since the 1980s, social science disciplines have moved to a new era of formal modeling and/or quantitative analysis, where theory testing based on large-scale and systematic data analysis became the mainstream research style. As more and more time is devoted to collecting survey or archival data, ironically researchers become increasingly distant from the actual processes in organizations. (The void is filled by those business school gurus who have less contact with rigorous research.) Unfortunately, research on Chinese organizations is increasingly shaped by this kind of research. The strong incentive for scholars to publish in English journals has inadvertently induced them to play the publishing game while ignoring the mission of intellectual endeavor—to understand and explain. Scholars are driven to invest heavily in sophisticated statistical skills and an appetite for large data sets, often at the expense of close observation and sense making. Research on Chinese organizations tends to be

based on surveys and takes a long-distance macroview of organizational phenomena but pays little attention to understanding what is really going on in organizations. As a result, our knowledge about Chinese organizations has not increased in proportion to the number of publications in this area. These organizations remain opaque, fuzzy, and mysterious to both researchers and readers. Reflecting on the negative effect of statistical modeling in understanding changes in history, economic historian Landes (1994) stated, "Let me make a modest proposal. Economic history needs protection against bad numbers. The more artful our econometric techniques, the greater the recourse to quantification, the more protection we need" (654). In our view, social scientists should take this proposal seriously as well.

On the theoretical front, there is also an urgent need to develop more sophisticated models of Chinese organizations. In explaining the institutional changes in China, Walder (1994) argued:

It is relatively easy to develop a list of "causes," but an explanation, or theory, must specify clearly the links—that is, the social processes or institutional mechanisms—between the suspected causes and the political outcomes they are thought to create. Many emerging explanations . . . neglect these links, and therefore remain vague and difficult to evaluate. . . . Our understanding of these historical changes will be enhanced to the extent that we can move from discussions about what factors or variables are important to examinations of social processes and mechanisms that may or may not have served to bring about change. (303)

Indeed, theories matter only to the extent that they are serious about specifying the underlying mechanisms that link the causes to the outcomes. As a starting point, theories need to be built on a serious effort to understand the actual processes of change, the institutional context and historical legacy, rather than simply relying on some ready-made and fashionable models and concepts.

Consider the role of local governments. It has long been recognized that organizations are political coalitions of multiple interests and goals. As a result, within an organization preferences and goals are temporary, shifting, and inconsistent. In this light, then, the role of local government requires much more serious scrutiny. Moreover, we also need to consider the relationship between local bureaucrats and their task environment. For example, Zhou (2009) showed that facing multiple tasks in their daily work local bureaucrats will balance and prioritize these tasks, giving selective attention to those that are urgent and pressing while ignoring others, generating diverging patterns of symbolic versus substantive actions. Without a broader view of such attention management, it is difficult to understand government behaviors. More important, career concerns are the main issues for the chief executive officer of the government bureau or local government (e.g., a township government). The age restriction weighs heavily on the minds of bureaucrats. Organizational rules also shape government behaviors. The rotation system created an incentive for short-term goals at the expense of long-term prospects. The strengthening of vertical command makes it difficult for the institutional design of complementary attributes in problem solving, inducing collusive behaviors among local governments (Zhou 2009). An organizational lens thus leads us to frame the research issues differently. In what ways have local governments been affected by, and overcome, such bureaucratic problems in their leading role in local development?

Witnessing the orientation toward formal theories and hypothesis testing in the social sciences, Hirschman (1970) called attention to the pitfalls of “the search for paradigm as a hindrance to understanding.” Armed with concepts and models developed in the existing literature, researchers have a tendency to search for evidence that fits the existing paradigm or to come up with easy “explanations” rather than taking the harder route of understanding what is really going on in the empirical world. Indeed, the literature on Chinese organizations is rich in theoretical speculation but weak in careful empirical studies that scrutinize these ideas. We witness a favorable soil for mutation in theoretical ideas, but it is coupled with weak selection mechanisms in scrutiny. As a result, there has been a great increase in terminology, ideas, and expressions but much slower growth in knowledge. To overcome these problems, as Huang (1991) pointed out:

So long as research is restricted to macro-level or quantitative analyses, it is extremely difficult to resist the inclination to apply to China models and assumptions derived from one’s own context. Dense evidence at the micro-social level or, better still, the ethnographer’s sustained firsthand contact with the subject, however, allows one the possibility of developing a feel for the subject that is different from one’s preconceived notions. With that comes the possibility for inverting the usual epistemological pattern of proceeding from intuitive assumptions to empirical research. The opportunity is then opened up for perceiving and conceptualizing empirical realities that contradict our existing assumptions. (316)

To conclude this survey essay, we have witnessed impressive progress in the study of Chinese organization in the last three decades, and with the expansion of the research community and the elevation of research sophistication, the future of this field is promising. But, as we alluded to before, there are also major hurdles for future development, and we hope that our review and discussions here will help clarify gaps in our knowledge and areas that need improvement; in particular, we believe that a closer interaction between social scientists and organization researchers in other fields, especially the management field, will provide a major impetus for social science research in Chinese organizations.

Note

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Chinese Social Stratification and Social Mobility

Yanjie Bian

Introduction

Chinese social stratification and social mobility is a fast-growing and exciting area of sociological research. It is fast growing because China's post-1978 economic reforms and consequent large-scale transformations have provided an unusual, long-lasting opportunity for sociologists who are inherently interested in social change and social differentiation. To prepare this review I built a bibliography of more than three hundred relevant English-language publications since 1980 and a greater collection of Chinese-language research literature. This research area is also immensely exciting to scholars, not only because it progressively accumulates sociological knowledge about a highly dynamic country increasingly engaged in the global economy (Solinger 2001) but also because researchers have examined questions of fundamental interest to both China specialists and comparative and general sociologists.

This excitement can be felt in an impressive accumulation of major journal publications on China since 1988,¹ in a growing number of active sociologists who have conducted original research in the country,² and in two most recent and highly relevant review essays in the *Annual Review of Sociology*. One essay was about China's social change and included a review of research on social stratification and social mobility up to the mid-1980s (Walder 1989a). The second focused more on evaluating theoretical developments and research findings for an ongoing "market transition debate" (Nee and Matthews 1996), for which China has been a focal point of observation. Anticipating that future researchers and classroom instructors will use the present essay either alone or with the previous ones, I defined my tasks as synthesizing post-1980 research achievements in three interrelated areas of China's (a) class stratification, (b) socioeconomic inequalities, and (c) social mobility. The main body of research literature under review is English-language publications by sociologists and other social scientists; I also included a few of the more interesting Chinese-language publications.

Class Stratification

Overall Trend

China underwent extensive change in the wake of the death of Chairman Mao in 1976. Under Mao a rigid status hierarchy grew out of a state socialist economy in which private ownership of productive assets was gradually eliminated between 1952 and 1958 by collectivization of farming and state consolidation of the urban economy, diminishing prerevolution social classes in a Communist regime (Whyte 1975; Kraus 1981). Ironically, the post-1978 regime under the new paramount leader, Deng

Xiaoping, began what now is known to be a remarkable reform policy that has decollectivized and commodified both the rural and urban economies, eroding the institutional bases of the prereform status hierarchy. Since then an open, evolving class system has been in the making (Davis 1995).

The Prereform Status Hierarchy

Four structural and behavioral dimensions classified the Chinese into qualitatively different status groups under Mao: (a) a rural-urban divide in residential status, (b) a state-collective dualism in economic structure, (c) a cadre-worker dichotomy in occupational classification, and (d) a “revolution-antirevolution” split in political characterization.

Key to the rural-urban divide was a rigid household registration institution, or *hukou*, that restricted all Chinese to their place of birth for their lifetime (Cheng and Selden 1994; Solinger 1999). Bound to collective farming, peasants were completely cut off from many urban privileges—compulsory education, quality schooling, health care, public housing, and varieties of foodstuffs, to name only a few—and largely lived in poverty (Parish 1975; Parish and Whyte 1978; Unger 1984; Chan et al. 1992). Only a tiny fraction of the rural born had the chance to “move up” to cities or towns through military mobilization, marriage, or attainment of higher education and subsequent job assignments (Kirkby 1985: 114). Organized transfers, or “sent-down” campaigns, of city-born youths to rural areas between 1958 and 1977 (more so after 1966) caused severe anxiety in the affected households (Bernstein 1977). Such an experience had a lasting impact on the life trajectories of these youths even after they returned to the cities (Zhou and Hou 1999).

The state-collective dualism characterized the Chinese economic structure, but in addition it created a status distinction between privileged state workers and their deprived collective counterparts—its Western analogy is labor market dualism in capitalist economies (Hodson and Kaufman 1982). While all peasants were confined to the rural collective sector, a working urbanite was assigned a state- or a collective-sector job. State workers, accounting for 78 percent of the urban labor force by 1978 (SSB 1989: 101), were provided with “iron rice bowls” of lifelong employment and an impressive array of insurance and welfare benefits unavailable to collective workers (Walder 1986: 44–45). This contrast was devastating because under the “work-unit (*danwei*) ownership of labor” (Davis 1990), only half the workers could change jobs in their lifetimes (Walder 1992: 526) or 1 to 2 percent per year (Davis 1992a), and 85 percent of interfirm mobility was within economic sectors (Bian 1994: 116). Such a regime of labor control reinforced state-collective segmentation (Lin and Bian 1991) and gave rise to the unique Chinese phenomena of “organized dependence” (Walder 1986), “work-unit status” (Bian 1994), and “*danwei* society” (Butterfield 1982; Lü and Perry 1997).

While “cadre” and “worker” were crude job categories in the official coding system, they were considered two status groups as well. “State cadre” (*guojia ganbu*) referred to a minority group—around 5 percent of the total workforce or 20 percent of the urban labor force—composed of those individuals who occupied prestigious managerial and professional jobs. These individuals were provided with above-average compensation packages (Walder 1995) and were kept in reserve for training and promotion into leadership positions (about 2 percent) in party and government offices (Zhou 2001). In doing so, Mao’s managers and professionals became fundamentally dependent on the

Communist Party and state (Davis 2000a). In contrast, those classified as workers (*gong ren*) most likely stayed in the group throughout their lifetimes; a worker's promotion into a cadre position was very rare (Bian 1994: 140–41). In the countryside, salaried government employees were recognized as state cadres, and village cadres, though unsalaried, were screened by the Communist Party and exercised political and managerial authority over ordinary peasants (Oi 1989; Chan et al. 1992).

Finally, all individuals and households were politically assigned to revolutionary (red) or antirevolutionary (black) “classes” (Unger 1982). “Reds” were the forces of Leninist party dictatorship, while “blacks” were the party-made “class enemies” (*jie ji di ren*) of the regime. But these were not fixed categories. Primarily, the deciding criterion was a person's family class origin before the land reform of 1948–50; a propertyless class origin made a person intrinsically red and a propertied class origin put a person in one of the few black categories (Whyte and Parish 1984). In addition, and more important, a person's political performance (*biaoxian*) in numerous party-led campaigns and activities could reverse a given class label, and that person could consequently receive different political treatment (Walder 1986). Each party-led campaign wave was the new moment of political relabeling, recharacterization, and regrouping; many had to be reconfirmed for their “redness” or “blackness” through political engagement, but new class enemies would surely be in the making at the time (Kraus 1981). This political labeling culture reached its highest intensity during the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), the eve of a new era of depoliticization and development-oriented reforms intended to “modernize” China.

Emerging Social Classes in Rural China

Post-Mao reforms were launched in rural areas in 1978 by the peasants themselves (Wang and Zhou 1994). A household responsibility system, which recognizes a rural household as the basic unit of production, distribution, and consumption, took property rights from People's Communes returned them to individual families (Oi 1989; Nee 1991; Chan et al. 1992). By 1983 collective farming was history (Lu 2001). As autonomous producers, peasant households had residual income rights over their crops, as well as the right to specialize in farming or free themselves from the land to work locally or elsewhere for a higher income in a nonagricultural job (Nee 1989; Unger 1994). Both of these opportunities increased tremendously through the 1980s and especially after 1992 (Parish et al. 1995). For instance, migrant peasant labor flooded towns and cities (Ma 2001). By 1995 an estimated eighty million peasant laborers were working and living in the cities. The once homogeneous “peasant class” (Parish 1975; Chan et al 1992) became differentiated in many ways.

A focused attention has been given to the faith of rural cadres. Nee and Lian (1994) were the first to argue that cadres, rural and urban, would gradually give up their political commitments to the Communist Party while turning their attention to market opportunities. Their opportunism model was a serious and constructive effort to formalize a theory about the declining political commitment to reforming state socialism. Fieldwork in Chen Village (Chan et al. 1992), Daqiuzhuang Village (Lin 1995; Lin and Chen 1999), and Zuoping County (Cook 1998), for instance, indicates that during the reforms rural cadres gained control and income rights over collective industry, exerted influence to obtain salaried positions for family members in village enterprises, capitalized on information and influence networks with private entrepreneurs, and even initiated “insider privatization” to strip off

collective assets (Nee and Su 1998). Other studies concentrated on developmental and distributive issues (Parish 1985; Nee 1989, 1991; Knight and Song 1993; Rozelle 1994; Lyons 1997; Oi 2000). Synthesizing these and other published findings, So (2001: 6) argues that decentralization had split Mao's peasant stratum into a rich peasant class and a poor peasant class and that the rich peasant class was capitalizing "on the abundant supply of surplus laborers in the countryside." Class conflicts had arisen, observes So, in the form of numerous protests by poor peasants complaining about high and irregular taxes, state-imposed low prices for their agricultural products, and encroachment on their land and houses, among other problems.

For two decades, sociologists inside China have worked as a team to study emerging rural classes. A thematic statement of the results of this teamwork can be found in Lu 1989, 2001. Not restricted by any specific theory, Lu's view mixes neo-Marxist concepts of ownership and control, the Weberian concept of authority, and Bourdieu's concept of expertise in defining eight emerging rural classes. These classes and estimated percentages in the registered rural population as of 1999 were (a) rural cadres, the political elites who control, one way or another, collective economy at all levels, 7 percent; (b) private entrepreneurs, the new capitalist class, less than 1 percent; (c) managers of township and village enterprises, the rising managerial class, 1.5 percent; (d) household business owners and individual industrialists and commercialists, the petite bourgeoisie, 6 to 7 percent; (e) professionals, the new middle class, 2.5 percent; (f) employees in collective industry and migrant peasant workers in cities, the "peasant laborers" (*nong min gong*) whose household registration in their home villages makes them a "floating population," 16 to 18 percent; (g) wage labor in the local private sector, the "new working class," 16 to 17 percent; and (h) peasants who work and live on income from agricultural products, 48 to 50 percent. Although informative, this classification is sketchy at best; both the defining criteria and the assessments of the distribution of emerging rural classes are subject to the ongoing transformations.

Urban Social Classes in the Making

Urban reforms were implemented later than rural reforms and have been closely guided and adjusted by the state (Wang 1996). First, the influx of peasant peddlers to cities ignited the rise of household businesses (*getihu*) among otherwise hopeless urbanites (Gold 1990; Davis 1999). Then there was a move to decentralize state industry and the fiscal system, giving financial incentives to local governments, factory managers, and individual workers (Naughton 1995). However, the redistribution-oriented policy and macroeconomic structure were coupled with a paternal factory culture, which presented resistance to reform directives (Walder 1987, 1989b; Shirk 1993). The emergence of labor and capital markets after 1992 finally put the urban economy under a market allocation of resources, although the new policy of "grasp the big, release the small" created a state monopoly sector containing strategically vital industries and firms and sent the rest of state firms to an "open" sector to compete with nonstate entities (Lin et al. 1998: 203–8). Massive layoffs and organized transfers of state-sector workers paralleled the flood of migrant peasants who worked in the informal, expanding labor market in the cities (Solinger 1999). Mao's protected working class of state-sector workers had become differentiated and disempowered (Whyte 1999), while state officials and managers gained executive control and

income rights over state properties and became capitalized (So 2001). Private entrepreneurs rose in the growing market economy but lacked any political interest or autonomy (Pearson 1997). Intellectual class status remained ambiguous (Zhang 2000).

The Differentiation and Disempowerment of the Working Class

Mao's working class was officially and politically recognized as a "leading class" (*ling dao jie ji*). Post-1978 market reforms eroded this status recognition and divided the working class into wage labor in the private sector (12 million as of 1998), unprotected labor in the state sector (70 million), layoff labor wandering in search of a job (30 million), and deprived migrant peasant labor (60 million) (Zhang 2000: 30). There were also large numbers under the categories collective-sector labor and retired labor. The disempowerment of the working class has drawn public attention, and stories about it have appeared in local newspapers. One vivid description is the "3-no world" of private-sector wage labor: no definite working hours, no medical insurance, and no labor contract ("*wu ri ye, wu yi lao, wu shou xi*") (Lu 1989: 418–19). While state properties are becoming productive assets for officials' and managers' private gains (Lin and Zhang 1999; Lin 2000), those in the category unprotected state labor have begun to feel that they are truly proletarians (*wu chan zhe*). A new urban poverty stratum was emerging from layoff labor and retired labor (Zhang 2000), and labor opposition became a sensitive and serious issue in a changing structure of state and society (Chan 1996).

The Embourgeoisement of Administrative and Managerial Cadres

Nee and Lian's (1994) opportunism model points to an embourgeoisement process in which Communist cadres give up political commitments in order to catch opportunities in a growing marketplace. So (2001) argues that a statist society is the trademark of China's reforms and only the cadres are in a historically strategic position to develop a capitalist economy. Thus the first decade of reform saw the rise of "local state corporatism" (Oi 1992), under which local governments became industrial firms while local officials either made capitalism "from within" (Walder 1994) or created "network capitalism" (Boisot and Child 1996) by taking advantage of their political and social capital (Goodman 1996). During the second decade of reform, the assets and profits of state enterprises were massively diverted into the private hands of cadres through "informal privatization," organizational proliferation, consortium building, and "one manager, two businesses" (Nee 1992; Nee and Su 1998; Ding 2000a, b; Duckett 2001). The most recent move is a state-imposed property rights reform, letting administrative and managerial cadres be the shareholders of the transformed state enterprises (Zhang 2000).

The Patronization of Capitalist Entrepreneurs

This theme is implied in the image of a statist society with a bourgeois cadre class (So 2001). Patron-client ties with state officials were the hallmark of private entrepreneurs in Xiamen (Wank 1999) and elsewhere. Nationally, the number of registered private entrepreneurs reached more than two million in 1997 and they hired twelve million workers (SSB 1998: 49). These "business elites" are understandably weak politically, having no interest, no autonomy, and no class capacity to work for the cause of a democratic state and politics (Pearson 1997). Despite the conflict between Communist ideology and capitalist ownership, party secretary General Jiang Zemin announced in his First of July

2001 speech a call to recruit party members from all social strata, including private entrepreneurs. Patronization may quickly change to a model of political incorporation.

The Ambiguous Class Status of Intellectuals

“Intellectuals”—professionals, cultural elites, and technocrats—have had an ambiguous class status throughout postrevolution history (Kraus 1981). Intellectuals lost their slight autonomy in the early 1950s when they were organized to work and live within the confines of the party state (Davis 2000a). Politically, intellectuals were Mao’s “stinky old ninths” (*chou lao jin*), ranking last among all nine black categories. They were flattered and cheerful in 1979 when given “working-class” status by Deng Xiaoping, for that status meant that intellectuals finally had become a “revolutionary” class in the reform era (Huang 1993). But this did not matter much; while intellectuals’ educational credentials keep them in a professional elite of high prestige, they still have to pass political screening to gain material incentives and especially political authority (Walder 1995). Huang (1993) sees Chinese intellectuals divided between “in-institution” and “out-institution” groups, depending on whether they work primarily within the state sector or outside it. This institutional boundary implies no anticipation that out-institution intellectuals are “autonomous humanists” (*xi you wen hua ren*) who might otherwise work in an independent sphere of civil society.

The Middle Classes

State factory workers, because of their lifelong employment and a high level of benefits, were seen to be Mao’s “quasi middle class” (Li 2001), and this once politically and economically protected group has become differentiated in the reform era (Whyte 1999). Mao’s middle classes—managers and professionals—were incorporated into the Communist order from the early 1950s on (Davis 2000a), but in the reform era these two groups, along with private entrepreneurs, appear to have become the central players in the rising market economies in rural and urban China (Qin 1999: 29–48). But China’s middle classes today do not yet share a commonly recognized image of their counterparts in an advanced capitalist society—a stable lifestyle, mainstream values, and active political participation (Wright 1997: 23–26). Instead, China’s middle classes live on unstable sources of income (Qin 1999: 65), have not yet developed a middle-class identity or value system (So 2001), and lack the political motivation to fight for the birth of a civil society (Pearson 1997).

Looking Ahead

Insufficient research attention has been given to emerging social classes in rural and urban China, and existing analyses are hampered by the still evolving nature of the social and economic structures in which social classes are in the making. Thus, insightful analysis and reliable assessments are to be called for from future researchers. An important first step is to get a clear picture of the complex and oftentimes ambiguous property rights structures. While information about property structures is essential for any class analysis (Wright 1997), getting it is not easy. Walder and Oi (1999) have suggested a local approach and have sketched a road map of the kinds of work needed. The next step is perhaps to research labor-management-capital relations in the production system. One example is

Lee's (1995, 1998, 2000) expanded case studies on gender and women in South China. These initial steps of original research, should lead to theoretical syntheses about how class differentiation results in class conflict, class movements or class politics in a new era. Such efforts have already begun (Chan 1995; So 2001).

Socioeconomic Inequalities

Overall Trend

Mao's egalitarianism reduced socioeconomic inequalities (Parish 1981, 1984), making China one of the most equalized among developing countries of the time (Whyte and Parish 1984: 44). Existing variations in income and income-in-kind were redistributive in nature: they were explained by rural/urban identity, work unit sector and rank, job category and scale, political power, and age and seniority, a set of variables that measure the main dimensions of a socialist status hierarchy. The introduction of market mechanisms inside work units and the rise of product, labor, and capital markets outside work units both redefined these dimensions and created new sources of inequality in the post-Mao period. The system of socioeconomic stratification remains mixed; continuation and change are the parallel stories about an emerging new order. This can be seen in several areas of research: occupational prestige, income distribution, housing and consumption, and gender inequality.

Occupational Prestige

The term *occupational prestige* was totally ignored in Maoist class theory, in which all occupations were said to be of equal status under state socialism (Kraus 1981). This was, of course, not true. Data from Shanghai showed that despite a strong ideological influence, high school seniors held strong preferences for nonmanual jobs over manual jobs (Lan and Chang 1982). Working adults, whether in China's capital, Beijing (Lin and Xie 1988), or an industrial city like Tianjin (Bian 1996), had no problem rating job titles on a prestige scale, even when income variation among occupations was small. When income variation grew substantially in the 1990s, a quasi-national sample showed similar scaling results (Zhe and Chen 1995). Overall, variations in constructed prestige scales were attributable more to variation in education than in income, a pattern that was also observed in more industrialized, more globalized, capitalist Taiwan (Tsai and Chiu 1991).

Constructed prestige scales from these studies provided helpful measurement tools for examining Chinese occupational hierarchies, making it possible for comparative analysis with the United States (Blau and Ruan 1990) and elsewhere. Chinese prestige scales are comparable to those from the United States and to an international scale (Treiman 1977), seemingly confirming theories of modernization and societal convergence (Treiman 1970, Treiman and Yip 1989). These interpretations, however, may have overlooked an important Chinese characteristic: state allocation of resources led to the identification of work units, rather than occupations, as the primary measure of social status (Lin and Bian 1991). Because prestige scales are stable cross-nationally and over time, they are insensitive to the political dimensions of social mobility peculiar to communism (Walder 1985) and to changes brought about by shifting state policies (Whyte and Parish 1984; Zhou et al. 1996, 1997). In current research,

both prestige scales and occupational categories are utilized in empirical studies of Chinese social stratification and social mobility.

Income Distribution

From 1978 to 2000, the Chinese economy grew from one of the poorest to the seventh largest in the world (World Bank, cited in *New China Monthly* 4 [2001]: 141), per capita gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 5.2 times, and per-capita income had a net increase of 4.7 times for rural residents and 3.6 times for urbanites (SSB 2000: 56, 312). Much of this growth was generated in coastal areas, where a reoriented central policy to prioritize developments there retained local savings and attracted inflows of domestic and foreign investment. This resulted in increasing income gaps between coastal and inland regions (Wang and Hu 1999). New riches accrued in coastal regions, but poverty persisted in inland areas (Lyons 1997). Overall, income inequality grew considerably (Hauser and Xie 2001).

Scholarly research has been guided by an interest in changing mechanisms of income distribution. This interest is intrinsically sociological, carrying Djilas's (1957) and Szelényi's (1978) questions about the social structure of power and inequality in state socialism to a changing system of social stratification under reforms. Nee (1989, 1991, 1992, 1996) has made a bold statement about the direction of change, and his theory of market transition has spurred a lively and fruitful debate about the social consequences of economic transformation. More elaborate reviews of this debate are available in the *Annual Review of Sociology* (Nee and Matthews 1996) and elsewhere (Szelényi and Kostello 1996; Nee and Cao 1999). The main theoretical differences lie in how to conceptualize the nature and characteristics of economic transformation. Is the transformation to be found in the shift of resource allocation from state redistribution to market domination that leads to the decline of political power and the rise of human capital and entrepreneurial abilities (Nee 1989)? Or is it a result of the dual transformation of economic and political institutions in which both human capital and political power are rewarded (Bian and Logan 1996; Parish and Michelson 1996; Zhou 2000)? Or is it ultimately a process of property rights rearrangements that will have clear implications for income distribution (Walder 1994, 1996; Walder and Oi 1999)?

Accumulated research findings show that income returns for human capital and entrepreneurship increase in rural and urban settings (see reviews in Nee and Cao 1999; and Cao and Nee 2000), although these increases are small compared to those in advanced capitalist societies (Parish and Michelson 1996). Zhou (2000) notes an interpretable difficulty in determining whether or not increasing returns to human capital are uniformly attributable to market forces. In his view, both markets and bureaucracies reward human capital, and, empirically, the Chinese government has in actuality made a continuous effort to raise pay for state officials and professionals during market reforms.

More serious controversial results are about returns to political power (Cao and Nee 2000). The concept, however defined, is operationalized in one or all of three ways: (a) party membership; (b) cadre position, past and present; and (c) jobs with redistributive power. Limited by feasibility designs and sample sizes, researchers have not been able to partition cadre position into party officials, government bureaucrats, and state enterprise managers; this makes it difficult to test hypotheses about whether "redistributors" gain or lose, relative to "direct producers" or entrepreneurs and professionals, under

market reforms. Because old-fashioned redistributors have become increasingly irrelevant with time, such a test is becoming practically unimportant. On the whole, income returns for rural and urban cadres declined in the initial years of reform (Nee 1989; Walder 1990). However, in regions of “local state corporatism” (Oi 1992), rural cadres have reaped income from profitable township and village industries (Peng 1992; Lin 1995; Cook 1998; Lin and Chen 1999), while in the urban sector since the mid-1980s cadres and party members have continued to gain rather than lose (Walder 1992; Bian and Logan 1996; Zhou 2000). This persistent effect of power, along with increasing returns to education, is also the case among Chinese elderly (Raymo and Xie 2000). These results are largely reconfirmed by analyses of two national sampling surveys: the Chinese Household Income Project in 1988 and 1995 (Griffin and Zhao 1992; Khan et al. 1992; Zhao 1993; Khan and Riskin 1998; Parish and Michelson 1996; Xie and Hannum 1996; Tang and Parish 2000; Hauser and Xie 2001).

Housing and Consumption

Rural housing and consumption have not been given much scholarly attention. Urban housing, however, has been both a serious problem and a focal point of observation about “socialist inequalities” (Szelényi 1983). Although basic low-rent housing (1 to 2 percent of household income) was available to virtually all urbanites under Mao, public housing, which dominated the urban housing market long before housing commodification in the mid-1990s, was constructed, owned, or allocated by work units (Whyte and Parish 1984: 77–79; Logan and Bian 1993; Bian et al. 1997). People working in rich work units could easily get a comfortably spacious apartment, while those in poor work units remain in near slum conditions (Lee 1988). Work units’ ability to provide housing varied between state and collective sectors and with bureaucratic rank (Walder 1986, 1992; Bian 1994). While work unit housing was allocated to satisfy needs (large or multigeneration families were allocated first and got more total living space), spacious and quality units were a work unit’s resources and served as incentives to reward political and managerial authority, seniority, professional expertise, and social connections (Logan et al. 1999; Tang and Parish 2000: 89; Zhou and Suhomlinova 2001). In addition, cadres, professionals, and employees from high-ranking work units tended to live in neighborhoods with proximity to leading public schools, piped gas fuel, street parks, and other community resources (Logan and Bian 1993; Logan 2001).

This redistributive system had many unanticipated consequences (concisely described in Tang and Parish 2000: 37), and since 1988 these have ignited several waves of reform to raise rents, to detach housing from work units, and finally to commodify and privatize housing (Bian et al. 1997). While central and local governments continue to be the main investor and constructor, a decisive State Council’s Housing Reform Directive in 1998 required all new housing units to be sold and purchased at market prices, terminating a fifty-year system in which housing was allocated basically as collective welfare (Jiang 2000). The newly rich have no problem buying a home. As of 2000, a home of 100 square meters in an apartment building in Beijing or Shanghai can cost 600,000 to 800,000 renminbi easily, or thirty to forty years of average income. There has been a trend to build luxurious homes in a globalized Shanghai, as observed in real estate advertisements (Fraser 2000). Homes in city outskirts, smaller cities, and less developed inland cities are considerably less expensive (Logan 2001).

Buyers with no cash can obtain mortgage loans from a designated state bank to pay for a new home, but a prerequisite is that their work units or private employers have deposited a proportion of employee income as housing reserve funds in the bank on behalf of their employees. While government offices and nonprofit organizations (accounting for 10 percent of state jobs) can secure such funds in state budgetary allocations, state-owned firms (accounting for 90 percent of state jobs) must do so on their own, and many, ironically, cannot; they are struggling to survive and keep a payroll operating in an economy in which state-owned enterprises are increasingly likely to lose any competitive edge they might have to private ventures and foreign corporations (Solinger 1999). A great many private firms and virtually all household businesses probably do not invest such funds, either because they are unwilling to do so or because their employees live in a “two-system family” in which one spouse works in a private sector job for a high income and the other keeps his or her state job to secure housing and medical benefits (Davis 1999). Predictably large numbers of families may still live in old housing units built before the 1988 housing reform and are under the old redistributive system, although such an estimate is not readily available.

Research interest in urban consumption before the reforms largely lay in economic egalitarianism (Parish 1981, 1984), workers’ dependence on the distribution of consumer goods and services by bureaucratic fiat (Walder 1986), and variation by work-unit hierarchy and political power (Bian 1994: chap. 8). More recent scholarship is oriented toward how the reforms eroded these “redistributive” patterns (Tang and Parish 2000). Yet there is new interest in, and observations about, the ongoing consumer revolution (Davis 2000b). Davis’s volume documents a decade of rising consumerism and material culture (table 1.1), which gave urban households great autonomy in choosing how to live in a consumer society. Although preferences are diverse, inequalities remain, primarily because of differences in income and social class (Yan 2000). Political power is coupled with entrepreneurial money in the pursuit of a luxurious lifestyle with leisure activities such as going bowling in nightclubs in Shenzhen (Wang 2000).

Gender Inequality

Research on gender inequality has proliferated since 1980, but the results remain mixed and inconclusive (Entwisle and Henderson 2000). Recognizing significant improvements in rural and urban women’s employment and income in Mao’s era (Whyte 1984) and especially women’s gains in basic education (Hannum and Xie 1994), researchers have also found that such progress fell short of a promised revolution in gender equalization due to the state’s limited capacities, shifting government policies, and a persistent patriarchal culture (Croll 1983; Stacey 1983; Wolf 1985). When evaluating the impact of post-1978 reforms on gender inequality, their observations led to different conclusions about the direction of change.

One observation is that the growth of market economies created off-farm employment opportunities for rural women, narrowed the gender gap in household income contribution, and enhanced women’s status relative to men’s (Entwisle et al. 1995; Matthews and Nee 2000; Michelson and Parish 2000). Another observation, mostly from the cities, is that as the market developed it eroded the power of the state both as an employer and as an advocate for women’s rights, leading

to labor market discrimination against female workers in hiring and layoffs, job placement, and wage determination in both state and nonstate sectors, and thus lowering the economic status of women relative to men (Honig and Hershatter 1988). Rising factory despotism in the private sector is worsening working conditions for South China women, who are kept in heavy labor activities with long hours (Lee 1995). Similar depressing stories from rural China are that men are leading the expansion of family businesses while women are left behind to specialize in agricultural jobs (Entwisle et al. 1995). Yet a third observation is that in urban China gender gaps in earnings and other work statuses remained stable from the 1950s to the 1990s (Bian et al. 2000). Intercity variation in labor market gender inequalities is largely uncorrelated with measures of marketization (Shu and Bian 2001).

Inconsistent research findings may be explained on at least two levels, as proposed by Whyte (2000). Substantively, they reflect the complexities of political, social, and historical processes that show that conflicting and contradictory forces can be in effect at the same time, producing such observable inconsistent patterns. Methodologically, inconsistent findings reflect the diverse research designs, data collection methods, and measurements and indicators used from the early studies to the most recent. Lacking reliable data is probably the most serious problem, for data are too often cross-sectional and gathered in one or two localities, thus preventing any reliable assessment at the national level. Whyte's suggestion is constructive: serious scholarly work that assesses the impact of reforms on gender inequality must carefully identify a realm of research, must utilize a well-defined set of indicators and measures, and must rely on comparable and systematic data.

It is important to understand women's perceptions of their positions in society. What do women think about their gender roles and their relative status compared to men in the workplace and at home? Revisiting Mao's female labor models and "Iron Girls," Hershatter (2000) and Honig (2000) found their stories far more complicated than the party-state line that women had broken gender boundaries in work; in fact traditional gender roles were accepted by many of these women. Other interview data indicate that traditional gender roles might be strengthening in the reform era; some women fantasize about fleeing work and seeing women's place as being primarily in the family (Parish and Busse 2000: 212; Lee 1998: 34–35). Married couples in Beijing feel that both household work and paid work contribute to a collectivized family and exchange between these two spheres is a fair trade even if one spouse has to specialize in one of the spheres (Zuo and Bian 2001).

Looking Ahead

Occupational prestige is not sensitive to institutional change but remains a scholarly tool for research in the comparative social stratification of industrial societies. In light of growing prosperity and rising consumerism in China, housing and consumption are increasingly important aspects of socioeconomic inequality. However, reliable and systematic information is unavailable about either housing or consumption. The research field of gender inequality is muddy, as diagnosed by Whyte (2000). All these research areas—housing, consumption, and gender inequality—also demand theoretical perspectives and analytic frameworks to guide future studies.

Research on changing mechanisms of income distribution has been a rigorous and fruitful program, making Chinese social stratification one of the leading and most lively debates in top sociological

forums in the United States and elsewhere. This program has been hampered badly, however. The key dependent variable, income, is vulnerable to serious—probably systematic—measurement errors, for conflicting institutional rules in a transitional economy make rural and urban wage earners deliberately, and rationally, hide many sources of income that are regularly not included in employee paychecks (pay slips), not to mention that the newly rich conceivably want to lie about their unbelievably high incomes from “gray” and “black” sources (Lin 2000) in any questionnaire survey. Income-in-kind is still relevant, but even the three main items of income-in-kind—medical insurance, pensions, and labor insurance—have not received sufficient research yet. Equally problematic are the theoretical construct of redistributor, its operating concept of cadre, and the measurement instruments of self-identified or researcher-imposed categories of office authority, job duties, or political affiliation. These research tools are problematic because the fast-changing economy makes “socialist redistributors” increasingly irrelevant. One interesting line of analysis concerns the changing decision-making structure in firms in which local party apparatuses are increasingly less likely to play a decisive role (Opper et al. 2001). On the individual level, insightful studies should pay attention to the changing sources of power of political, economic, and professional elites, as well as nonelite social groups.

Social Mobility

Overall Trend

It was rare to change an individual's social position in Mao's status hierarchy because of the rigid institutional walls: the rural-urban divide, work unit boundary, cadre-worker dichotomy, and political classification. Post-1978 market reforms and the rise of labor markets eroded these institutional divides, making social mobility a lived experience for almost everyone. Millions of peasants now work (in an informal sector) and live in towns and cities (Keister and Nee 2000), while many others have returned home to work in the cause of rural industrialization (Ma 2001). Urbanites also search for opportunities for economic prosperity by migrating to developmental zones in coastal areas (Solinger 1999). Interfirm and intersector mobility, which was extremely difficult before the reforms (Walder 1986; Davis 1990), is now very common; job change is either voluntary, with the purpose of career advancement, or coercive because of massive layoffs or organized transfers by state-owned enterprises (Solinger 2000). While these evolving trends call for rigorous research, serious scholarly works have been published in three well-defined areas of social mobility research: status attainment, career mobility, and social networks in occupational processes.

Status Attainment

Standard status attainment models attribute a person's attained status in society to two theoretically distinctive causes: inheritance and achievement. In capitalist societies, attained status is operationalized by the occupation of a wage job, status inheritance is examined with reference to the effects of parental education and occupation, and personal achievement is usually measured by education. When these models were applied to China, three significant modifications were made and all brought attention to the character of the political economy of communism. First, legacies of the 1949 Communist revolution defined status inheritance from a political perspective, making family class origin an

important dimension of inheritance in addition to parental education and occupation (Parish 1981, 1984; Whyte and Parish 1984). Second, in a social structure of “principled particularism” (Walder 1986), personal achievement is politically evaluated by party authority; membership in and loyalty to the party are credentials qualitatively different from education (Walder 1985, 1995). Third, in a centrally planned economy, state redistributive resources are differentially allocated through a hierarchy of state and collective organizations (Walder 1992); thus workplace identification becomes a more primary criterion of social status than the occupation of wage work (Lin and Bian 1991; Bian 1994).

Estimating these status attainment models requires census or survey data that are extremely difficult to obtain in China even today. Earlier efforts by Parish (1981, 1984) and Whyte and Parish (1984) were based on a “sample of neighboring households” (581 families and 2,865 members), established through interviewing 133 Chinese emigrants in Hong Kong. This sample found strong status inheritance in educational attainment; children achieved higher education when their fathers had higher education or high-income jobs. Family class origin was found to significantly affect occupational attainment; one obtained a high-income job when his or her father was a capitalist, merchant, or staff member, rather than a worker or peasant, before the 1949 revolution. Finally, one’s education could lead to a high-income job, but being a female was a disadvantage in both educational and occupational terms. All of these effects became nil for the cohort of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), however, a pattern that resulted from Mao’s policies of destratification (Parish 1984). Davis (1992a), based on occupational histories of over 1,000 individuals from 200 families in Shanghai and Wuhan, found that as of the late 1980s the Cultural Revolution policies had reduced middle-class reproduction, and more generally the bureaucratic allocation of labor and rewards favored older birth cohorts or “first comers” (Davis-Friedmann 1985) into the post-1949 Communist era.

Large-scale, representative sampling surveys began to be conducted by US-based sociologists in Chinese cities from 1985 onward and have enriched our understanding about Chinese status attainment processes. A 1986 survey in Tianjin showed that a decade after the Cultural Revolution neither father’s education nor father’s occupation affected a child’s job status and that occupational attainment was a result of one’s own education, which seemingly implies an opportunity structure in which status inheritance was eliminated (Blau and Ruan 1990). When the work-unit sector was used instead as an indicator of attained status in a 1985 survey of the same city, Lin and Bian (1991) found a strong father-son link in work-unit sector and a strong sector-to-occupation link within the generation. This brought attention to the institution of state job assignments, examined in detail using a 1988 Tianjin survey by Bian (1994): upon graduation from school, youths were assigned employment by state labor bureaus to hierarchically organized workplaces, where specific jobs were finally assigned. All of these three Tianjin surveys showed that education and membership in the Communist Party increased a person’s chances of being assigned to a state-sector job and that women were more likely to be allocated to collective-sector jobs with less pay and fewer welfare benefits than were their male counterparts.

A multicity sample taken by Zhou et al. (1996, 1997) broadened the research scope beyond the city of Tianjin. Their event history analyses show that a “distrusted” family class origin significantly lowered one’s chance of getting a state-sector job in all periods through 1993. A superior education increased one’s chances of working in public or government organizations, where desirable jobs were

located, in all periods, but a college education was becoming important for one's attainment of a party membership in the first decade of the post-1978 reforms. A clear pattern showed by Zhou et al. is that stratification dynamics were greatly altered by shifting state policies at all times. This reconfirms what Davis's (1992a, b) life history analysis had earlier shown about the centrality of shifting state policies to patterns of intergenerational, as well as career, mobility.

Career Mobility

Survey findings that education and party membership both affect status attainments have been carefully attended to in a growing research program about paths of mobility into administrative and professional careers (Walder 1995). Much theoretical tension originates from earlier studies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe about the relationship between political loyalty and educational credentials; rising educational credentialism alters the political character of a communist regime and was seen as a reason why intellectuals were "on the road to class power" (Konrad and Szelenyi 1979). Market reforms in China were seen by some as the hope for a change from virtuocracy to meritocracy (Shirk 1984; Lee 1991).

Arguing that Communist Party membership and education are qualitatively different credentials, Walder (1995) advanced a dual-path model and examined it with two sampling surveys. The 1986 Tianjin survey shows that individuals with superior education move into a professional elite of high social prestige, while individuals with both educational credentials and party membership enter an administrative elite with social prestige, authority, and material privileges (Walder 1995). The 1996 national survey of China provides more forceful results from an event history analysis: professional and administrative careers have always been separated from Mao's era onward, party membership has never been a criterion for the attainment of professional positions, and a college education did not become a criterion for administrative position until the post-Mao period (Walder et al. 2000). Party organization preferentially sponsors young members for adult education and eventually promotes them into leadership positions (Li and Walder 2001).

Other studies along this line of inquiry point to both stability and change in China's politicized social mobility regime. Zang (2001) used scattered sources to compile a unique profile of 757 (in 1988) and 906 (in 1994) central and local government officials. His models show that in both years college education promotes a cadre up the ladder in both party and state apparatuses, whereas one's seniority in the party "pushes" the person into the party hierarchy rather than the state bureaucracy. Bian et al. (2001) argue that membership loyalty is an organizational imperative and survival strategy of any communist party and show that in Tianjin and Shanghai political screening persisted from 1949 to 1993 in the attainment of party membership and in promotion to positions of political and managerial authority. Zhou (2001) argues that the political dynamics induced by shifting state policies cause bureaucratic career patterns to vary over time, and his 1994 multicity survey shows that the Mao and post-Mao cohorts of Chinese bureaucrats have distinctive characteristics. Cao's (2001) comparative analysis of Shanghai and Guangzhou shows a pattern of change within the state sector: while in less marketized Shanghai human capital's effects on career mobility are constant between profit-oriented firms and nonprofit organizations, increased market competition in Guangzhou led to

a finding that human capital is a stronger determinant of success in career mobility in profit-oriented firms than in nonprofit organizations.

Social Networks in Occupational Processes

Status attainment and career mobility models attribute persons' opportunities for upward mobility to their positional power and qualifications. A network perspective differs; it considers mobility opportunities to be a function of information and influence, which are embedded in and mobilized from one's social networks (Granovetter 1973; Lin 1982). This network perspective fits well a relational Chinese culture of *guanxi* (interpersonal connections), of sentiments and obligations that dictate social interaction and facilitate favor exchanges in Chinese society, past and present (Liang [1949] 1986; Fei [1949] 1992; King 1985). In postrevolution China, *guanxi* became more instrumentally oriented in order for someone to secure opportunities under party clientelism in the workplace (Walder 1986) or to break free of bureaucratic boundaries to obtain state redistributive resources (Gold 1985; Yang 1994), such as jobs. Indeed, *guanxi* networks were found to promote job and career opportunities for *guanxi* users while constraining those who are poorly positioned in the networks of social relationships (Bian 1997).

Guanxi networks have been found to facilitate all three aspects of occupational process: entry into the labor force, interfirm mobility, and reemployment after being laid off. On entry into the labor force, data from two Tianjin surveys show that the use of *guanxi* networks increased from 40 percent in the 1960s and 1970s to 55 percent in the 1980s (Bian 1994: 102) and 75 percent in the 1990s when labor markets finally emerged (Bian and Zhang 2001). On interfirm mobility, the same Tianjin surveys show a similar but sharper trend. Only half the workers had changed jobs prior to 1988, and half of them used *guanxi* networks to do so; by 1999 around 80 percent of current employees had changed jobs and only a slight fraction did not use *guanxi* networks (Bian and Zhang 2001). Another Tianjin study shows that laid-off workers in textile factories changed jobs through interindustry ties to obtain reemployed in a nontextile entity (Johnson 2001). Laid-off workers in Wuhan were reemployed more quickly and matched to jobs with higher incomes when they had broader and more resourceful networks (Zhao 2001: 68).

All of these studies show that *guanxi* contacts are predominantly relatives and friends of high intimacy to *guanxi* users, but when they are acquaintances or distant friends, connections are made through intermediaries to whom both *guanxi* users and contacts are strongly tied (Bian 1997). This is in sharp contrast to Western countries, where weak ties of infrequent interaction and low intimacy are more frequently used than stronger ties (see reviews in Granovetter 1995; and Lin 1999). This cross-national difference is due, argues Bian (1997), to different resources being mobilized through networks: Weak ties in Western countries are used to obtain information about job openings, whereas strong ties in China are used to secure influence from authorities, which is more difficult to obtain. In a rising labor market, *guanxi* ties of varying strengths may be aimed at both information and influence, and ties that provide both influence and information, rather than either, may allow someone to complete a successful search, a hypothesis that awaits empirical testing.

Looking Ahead

The three lines of scholarly work—status attainment, career mobility, and roles of social networks in occupational processes—are all guided by theoretical agendas in comparative social mobility, promoting our understanding about the social and political character of a durable communist regime. Understandably, research findings are constructed or given a scholarly flavor in order to test hypotheses derived from existing theories. China is an evolving world where tremendous transformations surface in many directions. Massive migration from rural to urban areas and between economic sectors opens opportunities of mobility in an economy of growing interregional variation. Large layoffs and organized transfers of state-sector workers are a social experiment of institutional change and industrial restructuring, providing unique data about downward and upward mobility. Because paths to economic prosperity or socially determined poverty in a society of growing differentiation and uncertainty are not always in a predictable pattern, more research, requiring a grounded approach and creative minds, is called for.

Most Recent Advancements

Entering the twenty-first century, overseas scholars have made new theoretical advancements in the sociological research on Chinese social stratification and social mobility. In this section, I will sum up the main theoretical arguments.

The Thesis of Institutional Continuation and Discontinuation

In “Postsocialist Inequalities: The Causes of Continuation and Discontinuation,” Nee and Cao (2002) made a significant modification to Nee’s earlier theory of market transition by admitting that the system of postsocialist social stratification has continued in important ways. They pointed out that continuation and discontinuation are coexisting characteristics of any changing social order, and as for postsocialist societies, the changes that have been brought by the introduction of market forces started with a small magnitude of influence. This is especially true in early stages of market reforms, when the slight impact of market mechanisms on social stratification and mobility would not survive a statistical significance test. On the contrary, long-existing formal and informal institutional forces that have been deeply rooted in the social structure are expected to have persistent effects, and such effects are more easily observed and assessed than those of market forces that have only begun to grow. Nonetheless, from the perspective that social change is meant to discontinue existing institutions, one must wait for a “tipping point” to come, before which point the system of social stratification would not show decisive changes. Therefore, the coexistence and interplay of continuation and discontinuation are characteristic of the path dependence of social stratification in postsocialist societies. This is why there has been empirical evidence of both the continuation and discontinuation of the redistributive institution even in the same studies. In this mixed system of postsocialist social stratification, Nee and Cao argue, an important research task is to differentiate between the causes of continuation and those of discontinuation. They suggest that such a research task can be carried out in a study of causal mechanisms of occupational status attainment, not a

study of income distribution. Analyzing a 1995 Chinese Household Income Project (CHIP) data set, Nee and Cao found a clear pattern of institutional continuation in occupational status attainment: membership in the Chinese Communist Party is one of the main factors in obtaining positions of power and privilege. While there is no evidence on the pattern of discontinuation that is expected to be caused by market transition, Nee and Cao believe that such a pattern will be observed when a tipping point of institutional change (e.g., when more than half the labor force is employed in the private sector) finally comes.

The Thesis of Political-Economic Coevolution

In “Economic Transformation and Income Inequality in Urban China: Evidence from Panel Data,” Xueguang Zhou (2000) argues that economic transformation in state socialism is a multifaceted process, involving both market expansion and nonmarket institutional change. Therefore, more than a single theoretical logic underlies the changing pattern of social stratification. Zhou further argues that market expansion is an all but autonomous process, that interest politics and market growth influence each other, and that such interplay must be given sufficient attention before one can understand how it would affect who loses and who gains in a market transition. On the one hand, economic activities in emerging market sectors are influenced by interest politics. For example, many private companies develop under “collective” ownership, managers of private companies cultivate personal relationships with state officials, and business transactions and contracts, even if they are made according to price mechanisms, are often mediated by local and central governments. On the other hand, the growing contribution that the expanding nonstate sector makes to state taxation is a positive and important cause of a promarket state policy, and gradually the state is transformed from a redistributor to a market regulator. In short, economic transformation in state socialism is a coevolutional process in which politics and market reinforce each other. Thus, it is important to analyze the ways in which the system of social stratification changes as a function of this coevolutional institutional transformation.

The Thesis of Market-State Interaction

Bian and Zhang (2002) argue that the notion of marketization is central both to the understanding of postsocialist socioeconomic transformation and to a possible resolution of the controversies of the market transition debate. In view of China’s postreform experiences, they maintain that marketization, a process of increasing economic competition in product, labor, and financial markets, involves not only changes in economic mechanisms and property rights but also a transition in the economic management of the state. While economic competition increases over time in all market sectors, the role of the state has never been detached from the economic sphere. On the contrary, along with increasing marketization, we have seen not that the Chinese state has gradually retreated from the economic sphere but that it has readjusted its economic managerial style, shifting from mandatory state planning to macroeconomic coordination. One of the important outcomes of this shift is that the state has retained monopoly control over industries of strategic importance through which to influence the distribution of state-sponsored projects, grants for research and development, and income. Their empirical analysis with the 1988 and 1995 CHIP data sets was designed to examine

how the interactions between market and state have increased the significance of both political capital and human capital in the distribution of income in the state monopoly sector, causing overall income inequality to increase nationally.

The Thesis of Economic Growth and Elite Opportunity

Walder (2002) argues that because economic growth and the resulting structural change may alter the distribution of power and opportunity, it is important to distinguish economic growth from market transition. For example, transition from agriculture to industry will result in structural mobility from rural jobs to urban jobs, thus increasing wage work opportunities and the return of human capital to nonagricultural jobs. Even without economic freedom and marketization, which are assumed in the market transition theory, economic growth will surely increase income levels across the board and consequently decrease the income return to cadres relatively: a large number of high-income positions will be created, and cadres and their family members cannot control all of the increased positions. Walder's analysis of Chinese data confirmed his research hypotheses.

In a 2003 article "Elite Opportunity in Transitional Economies," Walder elevates his analysis to a world level, examining the fate of redistributive elites in over thirty transitional economies in a comparative framework. He argues that market reforms do not necessarily limit opportunities for redistributive elite. On the contrary, there may be more elite opportunities in some transitional economies than in others. To Walder, elite opportunity depends on the interplay between the extent of regime change and the extent of rigidity of asset transfer. Walder suggests four different ideal types of transitional economy, the first having the least opportunity for the elite: rapid regime change makes the elites lose their positions; and rigid regulation creates a tight constraint, preventing elites from transferring state assets to their private control. The fourth ideal type of transitional economy creates the most opportunities for the elites because under less rigid regulation of asset transfer, gradual regime change either allows the elites to occupy their previous positions, from which to continue to gain as before, or permits them to give up their positions but become entrepreneurs by converting state assets into private ownership. Between these two extremes reside the second and third ideal types of transitional economy, in which there are ample opportunities for the elite. China is an example of the second type, in which members of the elite face two choices. First, they can choose to stay in their positions, where they can obtain high incomes through either corruption (abuse of positional power) or businesses operated by their family members, to whom they have provided lucrative opportunities. Second, they can choose to give up their positions and enter the private sector, where they can obtain high-paying managerial positions or become private business owners. Chinese political elites, observes Walder, are more likely to take the first choice over the second.

The Thesis of Capital Conversion

Eyal, Szelenyi, and Townsley (2004) make a bold statement about the thesis of capital conversion in their influential book *Making Capitalism without Capitalists*. Their point of departure is a pair of well-known theories of social stratification: that there are multiple asset groups in a stratification system, and that the dominant asset group may differ from one system to another. Transition from

socialism to capitalism, they argue, is therefore accompanied by a shift of dominant capital forms, from political capital in socialism to economic capital in capitalism. At individual levels, the conversion from political to economic capital is not random or easy, but the important mechanism of capital conversion is cultural capital. To the authors, cultural capital consists of knowledge, skill, experience, and political values, which help some of the elites to ably and rationally deal with system transition and continue to stay on top of the hierarchy. In contrast, other elites, who lack this kind of cultural capital, will have to rely on political capital gained from the past redistributive regime and are therefore unable to conduct capital conversion, consequently becoming the losers in transitional societies. In the economic transition in Eastern European countries, rapid market developments exceed the growth of capitalist owners and presents ample opportunities for intellectuals to become the new economic and political elites.

The Thesis of Enlarging Structural Inequalities

The theses reviewed above are about relative efficacies of elites and nonelites at microindividual levels. Wang's (2008) thesis of enlarging structural inequalities has led us to focus research attention on macroaggregate levels. Wang raised a different question: during the course of market reforms, have structural inequalities decreased or increased? The so-called structural inequalities refer to inequalities of income and income-in-kind between different residential regions, between economic sectors, and between workplaces. A widely circulated assumption is that market reforms increase individual freedom and reduce structural inequalities. Analyzing the 1986–2000 panel study of household income conducted by the National Statistical Bureau, Wang shows that income inequality among urban residents doubled over the fifteen-year span. What's surprising is that the increases in income inequality were due not very much to individual-level inequality but greatly to structural inequality. That is, inequalities significantly increased between cities and between workplaces. Wang argues that after market reforms, cities and workplaces were given increasing de facto property rights to manage their economies. This created two tendencies: while variation in income-earning abilities increased across cities and between workplaces, within each economic entity income variations among members of the entity were maintained at a certain level in order to avoid disintegration. Wang's framework has strong implications for future research on the distribution of income, wealth, and market opportunity.

The Thesis of Sponsored Mobility

Walder (1995) developed a dual-elite model with which to consider educational credentials and political loyalty as separate paths of upward mobility. Building on this work, Li and Walder's (2001) party sponsorship model advances our understanding to a higher level. They maintain that past researchers intended to use party membership to measure political loyalty and use educational qualifications to measure ability in career mobility models. But because leadership ability, work achievements, and, especially in recent years, educational qualifications are the important criteria used to screen and recruit party members, it is not clear whether party membership is a pure indicator of political loyalty. This also adds complications to the interpretation of effects of human and political capital: we cannot say that the effect of party membership on career mobility reflects the principle of political loyalty,

nor do we interpret the effect of educational qualifications as reflecting ability. To solve this problem, they suggest a party sponsorship model that considers the timing of one's entrance into the party: those who became party members in their youth are likely to have been sponsored by the party for ample opportunities, which in turn result in lifelong benefits. Early entry into the party is an indication that the young party member has been selected as a candidate for future promotion into positions of power and privilege. Li and Walder's analysis of a 1996 national survey provides supporting evidence for their thesis.

The Thesis of Persistent Political Screening

In the dual-elite model, party membership is considered a result of political screening, but what was left unexamined was how forms of political screening and their impact on career mobility have changed across different periods of historical significance. Studying this issue, Bian, Shu, and Logan (2001) argue that the survival of a communist party, like any political party, necessarily relies on the political loyalty and organizational commitment of their memberships, without which the party would not be much different from a short-lived social movement or organization. The Chinese Communist Party, in their view, has a sufficient track record to adjust its party recruitment strategies in order to carry out the party's missions and objectives, which are modified from time to time, but in a persistent manner political screening has remained a tight process through which to check on the political loyalty and commitment of party members and cadres. In an event history analysis of survey data from Tianjin and Shanghai, they found that by the early 1990s political screening was a persistent factor in party membership recruitment and political promotions.

The Thesis of Selective Mobility

Most researchers of social mobility are interested in social constraints that prevent certain groups of individuals from obtaining mobility opportunities. Wu and Xie (2003) raise a different question: to what extent do individuals have the freedom to choose between options and what mobility opportunities and outcomes they may obtain? The point of departure of their selective mobility model is an empirical observation: the income return to education is higher in the private sector than in the state sector. They argue that this does not necessarily mean that the market sector pays a higher premium to education than does the state sector; rather, it probably means that different economic sectors have used different levels of education as sorting mechanisms. Analyzing a 1996 national survey, they find that those who entered the labor market in the early stage of market reform would obtain no higher income return to their education than their counterparts in the state sector, but those who entered the labor market during the later stages of market reform tend to have significantly higher returns to their education than their counterparts in the state sector. Although this difference in income return to education is often interpreted by researchers as resulting from the higher pay premium provided by the private sector, in fact the difference is generated by the significant different attributes of the workers who entered the private and state sectors during the later stages of market reform: those who decided to "jump into the sea" during the later stages are superior in terms of their human capital, entrepreneurial abilities, and perhaps social capital than their counterparts in the state sector. A general

message of theoretical significance is that transition from redistribution to market is a complex social process, through which we must explore deeper institutional logics in order to derive testable research hypotheses.

Conclusion

Chinese social stratification and social mobility will remain one of the most interesting areas of sociological research in the decades ahead. China presents an unusual research field of sociological experiments for many questions about class stratification, socioeconomic inequalities, and social mobility. A great amount of original research has promoted our understanding of status groups before the post-1978 reforms, but significantly less attention has been paid to emerging social classes in rural and urban China today. This is partly because property rights arrangements in the production system, key to any rigorous assessment of class stratification, are highly complicated and ambiguous, partly because social classes are in the making and do not yet show clear class boundaries. Theoretically exciting research has instead been conducted about human and political mechanisms of income distribution, housing acquisition, and gender inequality in the reform era. There is equally impressive research output about status attainment, career mobility into elite groups, and social network approaches to occupational processes. Despite these achievements, China's evolving political and economic institutions conceivably create uncertainties and unpredictable patterns, calling for original research from which to generate new theoretical perspectives that will help us understand and explain agents, sources, and mechanisms of change in the system of social stratification and social mobility. Such efforts have already begun in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Notes

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¹ My library search indicates that *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, and *Social Forces* published on China nineteen articles from 1949 to 1987 and forty-five articles and commentaries in the most recent fourteen years since 1988.

² Beside China specialists, well-known sociologists not known as having expertise on China include Peter Blau, Craig Calhoun, Randall Collins, Glen Elder, Barbara Entwisle, Alex Inkeles, John R. Logan, Phyllis Moen, Ivan Szelényi, Donald Treiman, and Nancy Tuma. Many more researchers are currently engaged in China-related research projects.

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Studying Chinese Politics: Farewell to Revolution?

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More than twenty years after the collapse of communism across Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China (PRC) remains today (in its basic political framework, if no longer its economic system) a communist country. Yet beneath this continuity in China's political institutions lie deeper changes that have profoundly unsettled both Chinese politics and those who study it.¹

The “Revolutionary” Generations: Totalitarianism and Maoism

Half a century ago the study of Chinese politics appeared to most Western observers, while frustratingly opaque, at least methodologically straightforward. Born during the height of the Cold War, the Chinese politics field was from the start imbued with a know-thy-enemy mentality, which inclined its practitioners to view Russian language and Soviet history as passkeys for unlocking the secrets of Chinese Communism. An emerging generation of China specialists began their graduate training as students of Soviet politics. Paradigms in the nascent field of Chinese politics were often borrowed wholesale from those previously developed for the Soviet Union. Benjamin I. Schwartz's pioneering study of Maoism notwithstanding,² the prevailing image of the new PRC was as a carbon copy (even if a somewhat blurred one) of the Soviet Union.³

Within a few years, the Great Leap Forward and the attendant rift between the two Communist giants would erode the myth of Sino-Soviet sameness.⁴ With the launch of the Cultural Revolution in the mid-1960s, the pendulum of scholarly fashion swung sharply away from the generic totalitarian model that had preoccupied the first generation—toward a fascination with Maoist idiosyncrasies. The Chinese revolution came to be seen as the point of departure for a brand of communism fundamentally distinct from the Russian exemplar. Studies of Mao's personality, thought, tactics, and machinations dominated the literature on Chinese politics.⁵

Handicapped though this second generation of scholarship was by its lack of direct access to the field, it nevertheless took seriously the task of explaining the central components of a Maoist system that obviously diverged in many crucial respects from its counterparts elsewhere in the communist world.⁶ Arguably the most notable of these differences was Mao's penchant for “continuing the revolution” in the form of mass campaigns. In both origin and outcome, China's tumultuous revolutionary road was seen increasingly as an indigenous creation, as opposed to an alien implant. John King Fairbank would later insist that “anyone who tries to understand the Chinese revolution without a considerable knowledge of Chinese history is committed to flying blind among mountains.”⁷ Scholars still regarded the Communist revolution as a watershed event, but less for ushering in a Soviet-style polity than for

incubating the distinctively Chinese features of Mao's mobilizing regime. An outpouring of Communist base area studies, sensitive to local historical patterns, reexamined the Chinese revolutionary process with an eye toward continuities that spanned the 1949 divide.⁸

The “Postrevolutionary” Generation: Up to the Archives and Down to the Villages

The death of Mao Zedong in September 1976 (and the stunning arrest of the Gang of Four the following month) set the Chinese politics field adrift—cut loose from the revolutionary moorings that had anchored it in previous decades. Sobered by China's repudiation of the Cultural Revolution, as well as by its own firsthand experiences in the PRC, the “postrevolutionary” generation of Chinese politics specialists painted a less rosy picture of its object of study.⁹ In happy contrast to its elders, moreover, this younger generation enjoyed the extraordinary opportunity to conduct substantive primary research within China. Taking advantage of the two main avenues rendered accessible to foreign scholars since the 1980s, some political scientists pursued historically grounded research in government archives while many more undertook grassroots fieldwork. Both contributed to a deeper empirical understanding of the development of modern and contemporary China, as well as to general social science debates about institutional continuity and change.

The historical work offered a newfound appreciation of the significant parallels between the Nationalist and Communist regimes, thereby questioning earlier interpretations of Mao's revolution as representing a complete break with previous Chinese politics. Influenced by the literature on state building in Western Europe,¹⁰ scholars now saw the Nanjing decade (1927–37) as a moment of institutional innovation rather than simply a time of disintegration. In areas ranging from tax collection and personnel management to labor relations and military conscription, Nationalist practices were shown to have prefigured those of their Communist successors in key respects.¹¹ To the degree that the modern Chinese state was a product of revolution, then, the revolutionary roots needed to be traced back beyond the Communist wartime base areas—at least to the 1920s, if not as far as 1911.

The grassroots fieldwork provided heretofore unattainable detail on the contemporary local scene, particularly concerning the subject areas most amenable to investigation by foreign scholars: village elections and rural political economy.¹² The microfocus of the fieldwork offered a refreshing contrast to the sweeping generalizations, often based on scant information, that had previously characterized the Chinese politics field. Using hard data gleaned from surveys and extended interviews, scholars now debated whether richer or poorer villages were more likely to carry out “democratic” elections, and whether such elections did or did not tend to reduce corruption and enhance economic performance at the grass roots.

In absorbing the attention of such a large number of researchers, however, this “worm's-eye view” of Chinese politics also carried a significant cost. Fascinated by the details to be discovered while slogging through the paddy fields, few scholars had the time or inclination to develop a more comprehensive macromodel of the post-Mao polity. We learned much about the bases of village dynamism but remarkably little about the glue that somehow prevented these newly unleashed centrifugal forces from undoing the entire system. Compared with both of the two previous “revolutionary” generations of scholarship, this later generation devoted scant attention to the operations of the central party-state.¹³

Absent the magnetic pull of the Great Helmsman, students of contemporary China rediscovered the value of comparative communism in their search for an alternative theoretical compass.¹⁴ But, especially after the revolutions of 1989, which toppled communist regimes from Budapest to Bucharest, the analytical focus shifted away from the sinews of state power toward the sources of social and economic change. Now the field debated whether or not the resilient “civil society” that Eastern Europeanists had spotlighted as a precipitant of a democratic capitalist transition in that part of the world could be detected in China as well.¹⁵

More than thirty-five years after Mao’s death and nearly twenty-five years past June Fourth, China remains a Leninist party-state. In fact, one might well argue that the prospects for fundamental political transformation look less promising today than they did in the early post-Mao period when leaders like Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang spearheaded serious, if short-lived, efforts at political reform.¹⁶ But while political progress appears to have stalled, the Chinese economy continues to demonstrate impressive growth. Perhaps not surprisingly, then, an early interest in village elections and other signs of “democratization” has been somewhat eclipsed in recent years by debates about political economy. Can China sustain high rates of economic growth without a clearer specification of property rights, as has occurred in many formerly communist countries?¹⁷ Will China succumb to the scourge of crony capitalism that has hamstrung a number of other developing countries?¹⁸ Or can strong state supervision keep the Chinese economic experiment on track—even as it moves steadily toward greater privatization and market freedom?¹⁹

The Limits of Comparison

The answers to these questions are far from clear, in large part because we have such little understanding of what holds the contemporary state structure together and thus allows the political system to function as effectively as it does.²⁰ Moreover, there are no obvious counterparts elsewhere in the world to the situation that China currently faces.²¹ Although the field of Chinese politics has been greatly invigorated by its post-Mao reengagement with comparative questions—ranging from civil society and democratization to property rights and rent seeking—the fact is that contemporary China is not easily likened to other countries. Long-standing differences between Chinese and Soviet Communism have held major implications for the course of reform in the two countries.²² (E.g., Mao’s communes, in contrast to Stalin’s collective farms, paid the peasants in collectively determined work points rather than state wages, and vested landownership in the team or brigade rather than with the state. This meant that, although the household responsibility system was eagerly embraced by many Chinese farmers as a substitute for collective work points, issues of landownership and control remain highly contentious—accounting for much of the conflict and violence sweeping the Chinese countryside today.) But post-Mao authoritarianism also departs markedly from garden-variety authoritarian regimes in which militarists gain power by means of coups d’etat (rather than revolutionary mobilization) only to preside over bankrupt economies.²³

In some respects the “East Asian developmental state,” which afforded a fruitful paradigm for the analysis of other rapidly growing economies in the region, seems like a more promising framework for cross-national comparison than either communism or run-of-the-mill authoritarianism.²⁴ Yet as is

often noted, China's huge size and heterogeneity render facile comparisons with Japan—let alone the “Four Little Tigers” (Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong)—of limited applicability.²⁵

In terms of scale and diversity, the only case roughly comparable to that of China is of course India—which has also launched an ambitious program of economic liberalization in recent years (beginning in the 1980s but with particular urgency following that country's severe macroeconomic crisis of 1991). Yet the very different patterns of reform in the two Asian giants remind us of their starkly divergent histories and political systems. While both countries have enjoyed impressive economic growth in recent decades,²⁶ on virtually every standard indicator of economic success (gross national product, per capita income, industrialization, total factor productivity, exports, capital flows, external debt, and the like) China has far outpaced its neighbor. Moreover, in terms of quality-of-life measures such as literacy and life expectancy, China also notably outperforms India.

Scholars who have attempted to explain this glaring discrepancy in the two countries' socioeconomic development offer contradictory assessments of the impact of their respective political systems.²⁷ Atul Kohli has attributed India's relatively lackluster reform results to interest-group gridlock stemming from its pluralist democracy.²⁸ In a similar vein, T. N. Srinivasan notes that in China “the firm control held by the party made it much easier than in India to undertake and implement reforms. . . . [T]he success of Chinese reforms has been in part due to China's being an authoritarian society.”²⁹ Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, by contrast, stress that “while India has much to learn from China in the field of economic and social policy, the lessons do not include any overwhelming merit of its more authoritarian system.”³⁰ And Jagdish Bhagwati, characterizing India as “the model that couldn't,” argues nonetheless that “authoritarianism seems to be neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for rapid growth.”³¹

Yet the fact remains that it was during the height of Chinese authoritarianism—the Maoist era—that the foundations of contemporary growth were laid. Following on a successful revolution that had been waged and won in the countryside, Mao and his comrades devoted unprecedented state attention to the peasantry. That attention definitely had its dark side—as the horrendous Great Leap famine (following the introduction of people's communes) and the huge gap between standards of living in urban and rural areas (enforced through a rigid household registration policy) attested. Despite its rural revolution, China suffered what economist Nicholas R. Lardy characterizes as a “puzzling” undervaluation of agriculture for most of the Maoist period. The result was chronic poverty for millions of peasants.³² Even so, Mao's revolutionary regime must also be credited with important gains in improving the quality of life for much of its populace. Deeply flawed as the Chinese effort certainly was, the contrast with India is nonetheless stark. Bhagwati notes that, in comparison to China, “the Indian planners underestimated the productive role of better health, nutrition, and education and hence underspent on them.”³³ Dreze and Sen acknowledge that “the larger success of the Chinese efforts at social progress has been, to a great extent, the result of the stronger political commitment of its leadership to eliminating poverty and deprivation.”³⁴ Rhoads Murphey, writing at the end of the Maoist period, attributed China's relative success (*vis-à-vis* India) in improving rural living standards to “the government's commitment to this idea, and the power of central planning there, backed up by a revolutionary ideology and drawing on the immense force of a uniquely mobilized population.”³⁵ Without the PRC's investment during the 1950s–70s in rudimentary health care, education, and

infrastructure, all of which Mao personally championed as an expression of his revolutionary agenda and which he implemented (to varying degrees) through a series of mass campaigns, China's subsequent economic gains appear inconceivable.³⁶ As John King Fairbank observed at the outset of the reform era, "This rural industrialization bears the stamp of Chairman Mao. . . . Tarnished or not, his monument is in the countryside."³⁷

Bringing the Revolution Back In

The familiar claim that "China's earlier revolutions are fading as the country is set to become one of the major economic powers of the twenty-first century" may therefore be open to qualification.³⁸ One might argue instead that China's stunning economic strides in the reform era can *only* be understood against the background of a revolutionary history that remains highly salient in many respects. To be sure, China's weakly articulated legal and financial institutions (closely linked to its revolutionary past) may in time pose insuperable barriers to continued economic vitality. Whether or not China's political system will eventually prove to be a fetter on further economic development, however, it is clear that a number of elements of China's revolutionary legacy have facilitated recent gains. Despite valiant philosophical efforts to bid "farewell to revolution,"³⁹ China's revolutionary past has not yet been relegated to the dustbin of history. As Fairbank cautioned during the height of Deng Xiaoping's reform effort, "China for all its spectacular modernization still faces the problems and perils of the social revolution."⁴⁰

While an earlier generation of scholarship, concerned with the origins of social revolution, was apt to compare Chinese Communism to other revolutionary movements,⁴¹ contemporary studies of it are far less likely to characterize the PRC as a revolutionary or postrevolutionary regime. An important exception is Dorothy J. Solinger's recent work comparing the evolution of labor relations in China, France, and Mexico, which finds in all three countries "a relative sameness in the weakness of unions, paradoxically paired in each country with official concern for labor, in rather more than rhetoric, in accord with what were in all of them proud revolutionary traditions."⁴²

More common is the tendency to compare the PRC to postcommunist regimes, especially that of the former Soviet Union.⁴³ The Chinese revolutionary tradition cannot be equated simply with Soviet-style Communism, however, important as the Soviet example (with its Leninist party-state and command economy) assuredly was. Mao's techniques of mass mobilization, born in revolutionary struggle but adapted to the tasks of postrevolutionary rule, lie at the heart of Chinese exceptionalism. Distinctions between the Chinese and Russian variants of communism, noted by Benjamin Schwartz more than a half century ago, help to make sense of China's current situation—which differs both from those of other postcommunist countries and from those of other developing countries, including India. Any serious study of the Chinese revolution and its aftermath, as Schwartz discovered, leads to an appreciation of the distinctions between Chinese and Soviet Communism—not to mention the even greater differences with countries that experienced neither social revolution nor communism.⁴⁴

The curious paradox whereby certain elements of China's revolutionary inheritance have actually furthered the stunningly successful implementation of market reforms has yet to be fully explored or explained by students of Chinese politics. To be sure, specific features of China's "economic

miracle” have been linked to Maoist precedents. In particular, the initial dynamism of township and village enterprises was often attributed to legacies of the collective era such as commune and brigade enterprises and the continuing influence of cadre control.⁴⁵ But while many scholars have plumbed the origins of (sometimes short-lived) local economic formations, relatively few have tried to elucidate the defining elements of the larger political system within which such experiments have occurred. Taking a page from students of Latin America and Eastern Europe, China specialists routinely invoke the concept of “regime transition,” despite the fact that the post-Mao period of PRC history (1976 on) has already lasted longer than the Maoist era (1949–76) that preceded it. Whether or not current political conditions persist for many more years, their distinguishing features are surely as worthy of careful attention and analysis as a previous generation of China scholars once showered on the Maoist political system.⁴⁶

How is it that what is commonly characterized as a “transitional” regime has managed to hold on to power for three decades now, weathering a series of potentially destabilizing leadership successions (Mao to Deng to Jiang to Hu) while presiding over what may well be the fastest sustained economic and sociocultural transformation that any nation has ever undergone? The answer to this question is complex, yet a large part of the explanation surely lies in the retention—and reinvention—of many elements of China’s revolutionary heritage. In moving from Maoist Communism to post-Mao authoritarianism, China has not simply jettisoned its revolutionary past as it “transits” toward a democratic future. Rather, a succession of post-Mao leaders have managed to fashion a surprisingly durable brand of “revolutionary authoritarianism” capable of withstanding challenges—including grievous and growing social and spatial inequalities—that would surely have undone less hardy regimes. The achievement is even more impressive when we remember that the geographic entity we now think of as “China” is of fairly recent vintage, a product of Qing imperial expansion that was reunited by first Nationalist and then Communist revolutionary armies.⁴⁷

As Andrew J. Nathan acknowledged in 2003, “After the Tiananmen crisis . . . many China specialists and democracy theorists—myself among them—expected the regime to fall to democratization’s ‘third wave.’ Instead, the regime has reconsolidated itself.”⁴⁸ Nathan proceeded to detail the ways in which the post-Mao state managed to institutionalize the elite succession process so as to overcome factionalist tendencies and thereby avoid the political crisis that many had once presumed to be its inevitable fate. Recognizing that political stability hinges on social support (or at the very least social acquiescence), as well as on state institutionalization, Nathan conceded that “there is much evidence from both quantitative and qualitative studies to suggest that . . . the regime as a whole continues to enjoy high levels of acceptance.”⁴⁹ To explain this puzzling degree of popularity for a government responsible for the Tiananmen massacre, Nathan pointed to the impact of various “input institutions”—local elections, letters-and-visits departments, people’s congresses, administrative litigation, mass media—that “enable citizens to pursue grievances without creating the potential to threaten the regime as a whole.”⁵⁰

Other political scientists who have ventured to hazard an explanation for the remarkable survival of China’s nondemocratic polity have generally grounded their analyses in discussions of particular social forces.⁵¹ Drawing on an influential social science literature that stresses either the bourgeoisie or industrial labor as the vanguard of democratization,⁵² China scholars have observed that neither the rising class of entrepreneurs nor the declining class of state workers is pressing actively for political

reform. Bound to the party-state through a web of policies and institutions, the Chinese “bourgeoisie” expresses more interest in political stability than in political reform.⁵³ Indeed, a substantial portion of private entrepreneurs, welcomed by Jiang Zemin’s inclusiveness, has recently joined the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) itself.⁵⁴ And, although state workers, pensioners, and laid-off and migrant laborers have all launched dramatic protests in recent years, their criticisms have tended to evince more nostalgia for the Maoist past than enthusiasm for liberal democracy.⁵⁵ Divided by region, generation, and workplace conditions, aggrieved workers have been unable to form a united labor movement to press for improved labor standards—let alone a political movement to challenge the state.⁵⁶

Revealing as these analyses are, their focus on the interests and inclinations of social forces seems inadequate as an overall explanation for China’s “delayed democratization,”⁵⁷ where the primary cause must surely be located in state machinations as much or more than in societal motivations. Unfortunately, neither scientific attitude surveys of enterprising businessmen nor sympathetic interviews with restive workers are likely to shed as much light on the likelihood of regime change as would a sober assessment of the techniques of rule perfected by the Chinese Communist state.

In a volume coedited with Sebastian Heilmann, we propose that the Chinese Communists’ revolutionary past exerts a significant influence on contemporary policies.⁵⁸ Entitled *Mao’s Invisible Hand*, the book suggests that the accomplishments of the post-Mao economic reforms are due not only to Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” of market forces but also to Mao Zedong’s invisible hand of “guerrilla policy-making.” We argue that over the course of Mao’s long revolution, especially during the War with Japan, the Chinese Communists developed a distinctive and dynamic trial-and-error method of responding to crisis and uncertainty. The core argument of *Mao’s Invisible Hand* is that, thanks to its unusual revolutionary origins, the Chinese Communist political system allows for more diverse and flexible input and response than would be predicted from its formal political structures, which remain for the most part standard Leninist institutions.

This is not to argue that political institutions are irrelevant to the survival of the PRC. One key explanation for the surprising longevity of the system lies, of course, in the strength of the Chinese Communist Party, especially its ability to recruit, monitor, and reward the political elite.⁵⁹ Barry J. Naughton and Dali L. Yang point out that “China has retained a core element of central control: the *nomenklatura* system of personnel management” and argue that “this *nomenklatura* personnel system is the most important institution reinforcing national unity.”⁶⁰ In differentiating the Chinese trajectory from that of failed communist states, Andrew Walder observes that “China’s Party hierarchy has survived unchanged.”⁶¹ For Walder, cohesion among the top political leadership, state cadres, and party members at large is the glue that holds the system together.⁶² While the *composition* of the political elite has changed dramatically since Mao’s day (reflecting, among other things, an exponential growth in its educational credentials), its organizational *structure* has remained remarkably stable.⁶³

Crucial as these elite dynamics are, the regime’s future survival also rests on its capacity to curb and channel potentially threatening social forces. Nathan’s discussion of “authoritarian resilience” is one valuable step in the direction of understanding state-society relations in the current period, but his conclusion that “China has made a transition from totalitarianism to a classic authoritarian regime” would seem to underestimate the numerous continuities from the Maoist to the post-Mao period.⁶⁴ As many have pointed out, the term “*totalitarianism*” does not capture the extent to which Mao’s polity

made room for social involvement.⁶⁵ Thanks to its Maoist heritage, moreover, China's *revolutionary* authoritarianism is in some respects also quite unlike "a classic authoritarian regime." Although authoritarian regimes display considerable variation, Juan J. Linz notes that they generally share in common "the characteristic of low and limited political mobilization."⁶⁶ Sidney Tarrow elaborates:

That authoritarian states discourage popular politics is implicit in their very definition. In particular, they suppress the sustained interaction of collective actors and authorities that is the hallmark of social movements. . . . Repressive states depress collective action of a conventional and confrontational sort, but leave themselves open to unobtrusive mobilization.⁶⁷

Like other authoritarian societies, the PRC has certainly witnessed the development of a "hidden transcript" of unobtrusive dissent.⁶⁸ But Communist China parts company with classic authoritarianism in having periodically encouraged—indeed compelled—its citizens to express their private criticisms publicly in the form of big-character posters, struggle sessions, denunciation meetings, demonstrations, and the like. The Cultural Revolution was the most dramatic, but not the last, expression of this state-sponsored effort to stimulate and shape confrontational politics.

"Revolutionary Authoritarianism": From Divide and Conquer to Divide and Rule

The post-Mao leadership, following the example set by the Great Helmsman, has proven adept at the art of creating coalitions with, and cleavages among, key social elements as a means of stimulating popular political involvement so as to bolster its own political hegemony. This core feature of China's revolutionary authoritarianism reflects hard-won lessons learned in the course of decades of life-or-death struggles. As Chen Yung-fa detailed in his insightful study of the wartime base areas, the Chinese Communists' methods of revolutionary mobilization (and demobilization) comprised a remarkably flexible and highly effective strategy, perfected over many years of trial-and-error practice in diverse geographic settings.⁶⁹ Despite all the calls for nationalism and national unity issued by Mao and his comrades during the War of Resistance against Japan, their real recipe for revolutionary success lay in identifying and intensifying domestic tensions in such a way as to redound to the power of the emerging Communist party-state. A wide variety of social contradictions were reinterpreted in terms of a "class struggle" that required CCP intervention and direction. Chen aptly characterized the Communists' approach as one of "controlled polarization."⁷⁰

The history of state-society relations under the PRC is largely the application of this revolutionary lesson to the task of regime consolidation. Nationalistic rhetoric continued to be tempered by a politics of division. As Chen observes, "there was "no sharp break between wartime and postwar Chinese communism."⁷¹ A strategy of divide and conquer was adapted to one of divide and rule. The key institutions of the Maoist era—for example, work units (*danwei*) that isolated the industrial labor force, people's communes (*renmin gongshe*) that enforced rural self-sufficiency, job allocations (*fenpei*) that rendered intellectuals dependent on state favor, labor insurance (*laobao*) that bestowed generous welfare benefits on permanent workers at state-owned enterprises while leaving the majority of the workforce unprotected, personnel dossiers (*dang'an*) that marked citizens with "good" or "bad" political records, household registrations (*hukou*) that separated urban and rural dwellers, and class

labels (*jieji chengfen*) that categorized people into “five kinds of red” (*hong wulei*) and “five kinds of black” (*hei wulei*)—all served to divide society and foster subservience to the state.⁷²

Contrary to what some have suggested, this social fragmentation and dependence on the state did not amount to a “totalitarianism” that robbed the Chinese populace of a capacity for protest—quite the opposite.⁷³ Just as “controlled polarization,” waged under the unifying banner of nationalism, had facilitated a peasant revolution of staggering size and scope, so it also provided the framework for the huge mass movements for which the People’s Republic of China has been renowned.⁷⁴ Participants in mass criticisms and demonstrations of various sorts routinely organized themselves along officially prescribed lines. Even in the post-Mao “democracy movement” of 1989, often characterized as the most “autonomous” of contemporary Chinese demonstrations, protesters marched through Tiananmen Square behind banners announcing their state-designated units (e.g., the Capital Iron and Steel Works, the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, and so on). This reliance on state-supplied organizations and identities permitted rapid mobilization (and demobilization) at the same time that it undercut the potential for collective protest to escalate into a fundamental challenge to the state.

Although Maoist institutions have undergone substantial transformation in the reform era, earlier practices retain significant residual power.⁷⁵ Today, for example, urban registrations may be purchased as well as inherited, but they remain a crucial means for gaining access to educational opportunity. Jobs are now often procured via market mechanisms rather than by state dictate, yet personnel dossiers continue to play a role in promotions, pensions, and the like. The changing operations of these Maoist institutions, along with the emergence of new organizations (e.g., “homeowners’ associations” [*yezhu hui*] to supplement residential committees and “communities” [*shequ*] to replace street offices) demand our careful attention and analysis if we are to understand the multiple means, coercive as well as co-optative, by which the Chinese state manages to hold its restive citizenry in check.

A promising trend of late has been a growth of interest among political scientists in the issue of public goods provision—surely a key pillar of popular support for the Chinese Communist regime. Works by Lily L. Tsai on village infrastructure, by Benjamin L. Read on urban residents’ committees, by John A. Donaldson on poverty alleviation, and by Mark W. Frazier on pensions, for example, plumb the degree to which government officials at different levels of the system and in different regions are held accountable through various informal and formal institutions.⁷⁶ Absent meaningful electoral constraints, pressure on officials to provide public welfare is applied via cadre performance evaluations, community associations, and a mixture of other top-down and bottom-up mechanisms.

Important as they are, institutional mechanisms of accountability have never prevented the Chinese populace from demonstrating an impressive appetite for contentious politics—whether in Mao’s day or today.⁷⁷ Mao Zedong inspired a good deal of just such activity through the purposeful stirring up of popular contradictions and criticisms in one mass mobilization campaign after the next. In the post-Mao era as well, central leaders have sometimes (implicitly if not explicitly) encouraged ordinary people to take to the streets as a means of furthering elite agendas.⁷⁸ Although social groups often respond to state-initiated opportunities by airing complaints that exceed official bounds, both the mobilization and the demobilization of mass movements have proceeded along state-designated occupational and territorial lines in such a way as to reinforce social cleavages in favor of state control.⁷⁹

Every decade since the founding of the PRC, at critical moments when state power appeared to be challenged by disgruntled protesters—most notably during the Hundred Flowers Campaign of 1956–57, the Cultural Revolution of 1966–69, the Democracy Wall movement of 1978–79, the Tiananmen Uprising of 1989, the Falun gong demonstrations of 1999, and the Xinjiang and Tibet riots of 2008—the central leadership (while invoking the rhetoric of national unity) has adroitly applied the techniques of divide and rule. Public security forces, augmented by military units if necessary, work to ensure that various social groups—especially workers and intellectuals—do not join hands on these occasions.⁸⁰ Thus during the Hundred Flowers Campaign, the massive strike wave that swept through China's factories in the spring of 1957 remained remarkably isolated from the big-character-poster campaign then being waged on university campuses. That summer the Anti-rightist Campaign (directed by Deng Xiaoping), which brought a brutal end to the Hundred Flowers Campaign, applied different criminal “hats” to worker and student activists—symbolizing their distinctive political status. Although the early weeks of the Cultural Revolution saw student Red Guards take their struggles to the factories, within a few months they were prohibited from such activities, and soon the tide was reversed as propaganda teams of workers, often accompanied by People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers, moved into the schools to restore order. A decade later, the harsh, fifteen-year sentence meted out to Democracy Wall activist Wei Jingsheng in 1979 was probably due as much to his embodiment of dual worker and intellectual status as to his incendiary calls for a “fifth modernization” of democratic freedoms. In 1989 the very different punishments suffered by students and workers active in the “democracy” protests reflected the Deng Xiaoping regime's continuing policy of divide and rule. Whereas student leaders were generally detained and then released, worker leaders were more often executed. The draconian crackdown led by Jiang Zemin in 1989–99 against first the China Democracy Party and then the Falun gong reflected the state's unremitting antipathy toward movements that attempted to mobilize citizens across different geographic areas and different walks of life. A decade later the targeting of monks in Lhasa was designed to isolate religious leaders from their followers.

Long segregated into separate state-created categories, citizens themselves are often inclined to accept these divisions as a normal part of the political order. Consider the following incident. In the winter of 1986–87, large-scale student demonstrations broke out in Shanghai after police brutality occurred during a concert by an American rock group, which had performed before a packed and appreciative audience at the Shanghai Stadium. During the concert, several college students who responded to the performers' invitation to dance in the aisles with more enthusiasm than the police could tolerate were hauled outdoors and beaten. Fellow students, and then workers, poured into the streets to protest the police action. On orders from Jiang Zemin, then mayor of Shanghai, barricades were erected at People's Square to prevent workers from entering the ranks of the student protesters. Only those with valid student identification were permitted inside the police cordon. Workers amassed just outside the barricades, tossing in bread and cigarettes and shouting, “Younger brothers, your elder brothers support you!” To defuse this potentially explosive situation, Jiang Zemin went in person to the university of the students who had been roughed up by the police to deliver an apology on behalf of the city government. He explained to the tense all-campus assembly that the police had mistaken the *students* for *workers*, which was the reason they had reacted so harshly. Even more surprising in this self-proclaimed “workers' state” was the fact that the professors and students in attendance reported

that they found nothing inappropriate in the mayor's explanation.⁸¹ Thus mollified, the students returned to their classrooms.

Jiang Zemin's skillful deployment of the familiar strategy of divide and rule—successfully pitting one social group against another—won him the attention of Deng Xiaoping. And, after being tapped for central leadership during the 1989 protests, Jiang put these techniques to effective use in responding to a wide range of potential challenges. Although his regime dealt extremely harshly with movements (e.g., the China Democracy Party and Falun gong) that boasted a socially and regionally diverse membership, it showed considerable leniency toward conflicts—such as strikes by workers at a single enterprise or tax riots by farmers in a single village—that were more homogeneous in composition and locale. Indeed, Jiang's government even endorsed and encouraged some single-issue protests (e.g., the student demonstrations against the US bombing of China's Belgrade embassy in the spring of 1999).⁸²

While Jiang Zemin relied on familiar revolutionary methods of “controlled polarization” to tame social forces, the inclusive ideology that he attempted to formulate (and to propagate through a series of Maoist-style ideological campaigns) reinforced the official stress on national unity. Jiang's Three Represents—by which the Communist Party is supposed to serve as the representative of “advanced productive forces, advanced culture, and the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people”—was an effort to extend and update Mao's “mass line.” However, with Jiang's own rise to the pinnacle of power having been tied to the state's verdict on the 1989 protest movement as a “counterrevolutionary rebellion,” his latitude for ideological innovation was limited.

Not surprisingly, then, Jiang Zemin's much-publicized campaign against Falun gong, which got under way in the summer of 1999, branded this “evil cult” as “counterrevolutionary.”⁸³ And Jiang's successor as general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Hu Jintao, repeatedly summoned revolutionary symbolism in justifying his party's claim to rule. On a visit to the site of the former Jiangxi Soviet in the summer of 2003, for example, Hu enjoined officials at all levels of the party to “carry on the revolutionary tradition.” As Hu put it, “Comrade Mao Zedong and other revolutionaries of the elder generation not only made historical achievements by realizing national independence and liberation, but also bequeathed to us precious spiritual wealth.” A front-page article in *People's Daily* elaborated on Hu's remarks, writing that “such revolutionary spirit and tradition, which were fostered through arduous struggles, provide strength for overcoming difficulties and risks of all kinds in our way forward.”⁸⁴ Hu's subsequent slogan “building a harmonious society” did not supplant the recourse to revolutionary mobilization techniques.

The battle waged against severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) that summer was a telling example of how the post-Mao leadership adapted Maoist tactics to cope with contemporary challenges. In what Hu Jintao dubbed the “People's War against SARS,” neighborhood committees were charged with enforcing strict sanitation standards within their jurisdictions. Activists (some dressed as that passé paragon of Maoist virtues, Lei Feng) went door to door to ensure that the public adhered to the government's guidelines.⁸⁵ Reminiscent of public health campaigns in Mao's day (e.g., the Campaign against Schistosomiasis or the Campaign against the Four Pests), the anti-SARS effort attested to the continuing capacity of the regime to mobilize its citizenry behind state-initiated projects.

Slogans recalled the patriotic battle cries of an earlier era: “Activate the whole Party, mobilize the entire populace, win the war of annihilation against SARS!”; “Enlarge the national spirit, unite with one heart to battle SARS!” Despite the calls for unity, the tactics were divisive and draconian: tens of thousands of people were forcibly placed under strict quarantine; countless civet cats, chickens, and other possible disease carriers were slaughtered with little concern for the consequences; and so on.⁸⁶ Those who succumbed to the disease were designated “national heroes” and “martyrs”—with their survivors eligible to receive the same state-conferred benefits (free schooling, generous medical insurance, and the like) that this exalted status had long conferred on the dependents of “revolutionary martyrs.”⁸⁷ While the PRC’s response to SARS was understandably criticized by some policy analysts for its “out-dated mode of crisis management,”⁸⁸ in retrospect the effort to resuscitate seemingly anachronistic campaign methods for new purposes appears to have been quite successful. Joan Kaufman, highlighting the Chinese government’s ability “to detain and isolate citizens,” observes that the resort to Maoist-style public campaigns “was precisely what was required to put in place the series of preventive measures that broke the chain of transmission.”⁸⁹ A summary article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* concludes approvingly that “the multiple control measures implemented in Beijing likely led to the rapid resolution of the SARS outbreak.”⁹⁰

The post-Mao leadership is not content simply to make instrumental use of Maoist mobilization tactics. It also tries actively to instill a sense of revolutionary continuity among officials and ordinary people alike. Following Hu Jintao’s visit to Jiangxi, a branch of the Central Party School was opened at the site of Mao’s first rural revolutionary base area in the Jinggangshan highlands, so that cadres could reconnect with their revolutionary roots (while “roughing it” at one of the two three-star hotels located within the spacious party school compound!).⁹¹ For ordinary citizens, “red tourism” (*hongse luyou*) to the sacred sites of Mao’s revolution was vigorously promoted both as a means of improving the party’s public image (by showcasing its past struggles and sacrifices) and as a vehicle for pumping much needed revenues into what remain some of the poorest regions of the countryside.⁹² At the same time, the New Socialist Countryside Construction program has applied core components of Maoist campaign methods (tamed and tweaked, to be sure) to the ongoing challenge of rural development.⁹³

The penchant for tapping into “red resources” to address contemporary issues and thereby buttress regime legitimacy remains salient among a central leadership dominated by “princelings” whose main claim to rule rests after all on an inherited connection to the revolutionary tradition. At the immediate conclusion of the Eighteenth Party Congress in November 2012, newly installed general secretary Xi Jinping led his fellow Politburo Standing Committee members on an inspection tour of an exhibit at the National Museum of History that highlighted revolutionary milestones. Entitled “*China’s Road to Revival*,” the exhibit featured the heroic role of the CCP in liberating the Chinese nation from international humiliation and leading it through arduous struggle toward a strong, prosperous future.⁹⁴ Xi’s repeated invocation of the phrase “great revival of the Chinese nation” at the Eighteenth Party Congress underscored his commitment to blending nationalist and revolutionary sources of political legitimacy. That this approach enjoys considerable popular resonance was suggested by the widespread appearance of portraits of Chairman Mao in anti-Japanese nationalistic protests just two months earlier.⁹⁵

With state-promoted glorification of the revolutionary tradition, it is not surprising that protesters should attempt to capitalize on this “precious spiritual wealth” to further their own purposes. At the

Anyuan coal mine in Jiangxi, where Mao Zedong, Li Lisan, and Liu Shaoqi had organized the first working-class branch of the Chinese Communist Party and instigated the first successful industrial strike under CCP direction back in 1922, retired miners in 2004 called attention to that revolutionary history in pressing for a resolution of their current grievances: “During the years of revolutionary struggle, Anyuan workers suffered and sacrificed for the sake of the Chinese revolution. . . . Under the reforms, thanks to the exertions of our generation of miners, the enterprise has profited and prospered and yet we have not enjoyed the fruits of reform. Our wages have been cut and our pensions are very, very meager.”⁹⁶

Protesters draw not only rhetorical but also practical inspiration from revolutionary precedents. Faced with the threat of bankruptcy triggered by post-Mao industrial policies, disgruntled workers began organizing militia units to protect their factories—in conscious imitation of the revolutionary exemplar.⁹⁷ But this time their actions were directed against the Communist party-state in an effort to “liberate” their workplaces from forced closures. Political scientist Feng Chen reported on a scene at a Shanghai plastics factory.

As some workers proudly describe it, their action of defending the factory is similar to that of their predecessors on the eve of the Communist takeover in 1949 when pro-Communist workers formed “worker guard teams” (*gongren jiuchadui*) to protect factories from sabotage by the Guomindang. Ironically, however, the workers are now using the same method to ward off capitalistic takeovers endorsed by a party-state that still labels itself socialist.⁹⁸

Similar confrontations, pitting “revolutionary” workers against “reformist” government authorities, have taken place in many other parts of the country as well. Despite the use of revolutionary nomenclature and symbolism, such labor protests should certainly not be interpreted as proto-revolutionary movements poised to topple the state. Rather, aggrieved workers draw creatively on the language and legacy of the Communist revolution in an effort to shame the party-state into living up to the promises of its own “revolutionary tradition.”⁹⁹

The Consequences of Revolutionary Authoritarianism

The tendency for protesters to take cues from officially approved symbols of authority can be found in any polity, but it is especially pronounced in authoritarian systems in which the state exercises a virtual monopoly over political discourse. In such contexts, the clever appropriation and inversion of officially sanctioned slogans and practices is a prominent feature of (often unobtrusive) protest behavior.¹⁰⁰ Under the revolutionary authoritarianism of the PRC, where mass mobilization has been a hallmark of state-society relations, the practice of “waving the red flag to oppose the red flag” has been honed into a high—and often highly ironic—art form.¹⁰¹ Sebastian Heilmann observed this phenomenon among workers seeking wage hikes and improved workplace conditions during the Cultural Revolution.

In most cases, angry workers skillfully made use of official campaign slogans to camouflage their “economistic” interests. Officially approved slogans like “Down With the Capitalist Roaders” were deliberately used as a means of confronting an unresponsive leadership. . . . Under the cloak of

rebellion against “revisionist” forces, diverse groups of workers used the opportunity to complain about specific grievances in their respective work units and about economic hardship.¹⁰²

The turmoil of the Cultural Revolution originated in part from Mao Zedong’s effort to stem the tide of “revisionism” by cultivating “revolutionary successors” among the younger generation.¹⁰³ Although student Red Guards (and other social groups) strayed far from Mao’s vision of proper revolutionary activity, they were nonetheless constrained by the fact that their “revolution” had been launched by the chairman of the Communist Party himself.

Once Mao was gone, it became commonplace among students of Chinese politics to suggest that contemporary popular protests exhibit a degree of spontaneity and independence that marks them as qualitatively different from the mobilized movements of Mao’s day. Despite the pivotal role of Deng Xiaoping in (first encouraging and then suppressing) the Democracy Wall movement of 1978–79, foreign observers hailed it as an unprecedented expression of citizen-based pressures for democratization.¹⁰⁴ A decade later the Tiananmen Uprising of 1989 led many scholars to express excitement about what they saw as a fundamental break with previous campaign-style modes of popular involvement. Andrew Walder described participation in the Tiananmen Uprising of 1989 as “something new on the political scene: massive, independent, popular protests. The old mode of regimentation and elite-sponsored turbulence has been broken, and Chinese politics appears to have entered a new era.”¹⁰⁵ Similarly, Wang Shaoguang argued that “the protest movement of 1989 marked a turning point of changing class relations . . . [and] the working class in China is no longer a pillar of continuity but a force for change.”¹⁰⁶ The notion of a qualitative transformation was picked up by general comparativists as well. Jack A. Goldstone wrote of 1989 that “unlike other confrontations that involved mainly intellectuals, such as the Hundred Flowers Movement, or other events that were in some sense orchestrated by the regime, such as the Cultural Revolution, Tiananmen marked the first time that intellectuals and popular elements acted independently to challenge the regime.”¹⁰⁷

More than twenty years after Tiananmen, however, it is difficult to regard that confrontation as a turning point in state-society relations that signaled a new era of citizen-led protest against an authoritarian state. Sober reflections on the activities of Tiananmen protesters—including retrospectives by some of the principals themselves—question the extent to which their behavior in the spring of 1989 constituted a genuine rupture with earlier modes of protest. As Tiananmen activist and now Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo conceded in a bitterly impassioned essay entitled “That Holy Word: ‘Revolution’”:

Most of the resources and methods we made use of to mobilize the masses were ones that the Communist Party itself had used many times before. . . . As soon as we began our revolution, we became extremely conceited—just as if we had reverted to the time of the Cultural Revolution and felt ourselves to be the most revolutionary. As soon as we joined the 1989 protest movement, we considered ourselves to be the most democratic. After all, had we not fasted for democracy and devoted ourselves to it and made sacrifices for it? . . . Our voice became the only truth. We felt as though we possessed absolute power.¹⁰⁸

Liu's reflections are a stinging indictment of the Tiananmen protest as an undemocratic movement that unwittingly re-created many of the worst features of Chinese Communist revolutionary culture. The searing experience of the state-orchestrated Cultural Revolution in particular, according to Liu, continued to inhibit the development of a genuinely democratic perspective.

Despite its bloody suppression, the 1989 uprising did not ring down the curtain on popular protest in China. And many scholars continued to see in this ferment the signs of an imminent breakthrough in state-society relations. Kevin O'Brien and Li Lianjiang, pointing to the tendency of restive farmers to cite official government regulations and policies in justifying their (sometimes unruly) behavior, referred to this phenomenon as "rightful resistance" and argued that it reflects a growing sense of "citizenship rights" among ordinary Chinese.¹⁰⁹ David Zweig also detected an emerging "rights conscious peasantry."¹¹⁰ Pei Minxin—in discussing the impact of rapid economic development, as well as the implementation of legal reforms such as the Administrative Litigation Law—noted a "rising rights consciousness" within Chinese society at large. Summing up the history of the reform era with an eye toward the future, Pei predicted, "China's incipient opposition is likely to become more resilient, sophisticated and adept in challenging the regime as the conditions for democratic resistance further improve."¹¹¹ Merle Goldman argued in her book *From Comrade to Citizen* that "by the century's end the sense of rights consciousness . . . had spread . . . beyond intellectual and elite circles . . . to the population at large. . . . [T]he transition from comrade to citizen in the People's Republic of China has begun."¹¹² In a booklet commissioned by the Association for Asian Studies as a teaching aid intended to summarize prevailing scholarly opinion on key issues, Goldman wrote, "[A] growing consciousness of citizenship and organized efforts to assert political rights . . . signify the beginnings of a genuine change in the relationship between China's population at large and the state at the beginning of the twenty-first century."¹¹³ This optimistic outlook pervaded much of the journalistic reporting on China as well; a *Business Week* article, for example, spoke glowingly of "a new labor-rights revolution sweeping China."¹¹⁴

Such arguments about the growth of Chinese social power, fueled by newfound conceptions of citizenship, dovetailed with a prevalent view of the post-Mao state as a pale shadow of its predecessor—sapped of both the desire and the capacity to fully control society at large. David Shambaugh observed, "If one of the hallmarks of the Maoist state was the penetration of society, then the Dengist state was noticeable for its withdrawal. The organizational mechanisms of state penetration and manipulation were substantially reduced or dismantled altogether."¹¹⁵ X. L. Ding characterized the post-Mao state as gripped by a legitimacy crisis that led to a "gradual functional and organizational decay of the massive party-state machinery."¹¹⁶ The result, Pei Minxin concluded, was "the erosion of state capacity in China."¹¹⁷

Encouraging as such assessments may be to those seeking the seeds of a democratic breakthrough from below, I am skeptical both of accounts of state withdrawal or weakness and of claims of a new and growing awareness of rights-based citizenship in contemporary China. It is true that protesters routinely invoke a legalistic language of "rights" in pressing their demands, as is only to be expected in light of widespread government propaganda promoting the importance of such state-conferred rights.¹¹⁸ Bookstores these days are stocked with pamphlets detailing government laws, policies, and regulations; the airwaves are filled with radio talk shows that advise listeners on how to ensure that regulations are enforced and contracts fulfilled; newspapers are replete with legal advice columns for

aggrieved citizens; and so on.¹¹⁹ But post-Mao state propaganda heralding “reform” and “legal rights” bears a certain parallelism to Maoist state propaganda harping on “revolution” and “class struggle.” Just as protesters during the Maoist era borrowed the then hegemonic language of *class* in pressing their demands, so protesters today adopt the currently hegemonic language of *rights* in framing their grievances. I would characterize this phenomenon as “rules consciousness” rather than “rights consciousness.”¹²⁰ Instead of indicating some novel expression of proto-democratic citizenship or state vulnerability, the continuing adherence to rules consciousness seems to me to reflect a seasoned sensitivity on the part of ordinary Chinese to (changing yet still powerful) top-down signals emanating from the state.¹²¹

To be sure, Chinese citizens’ widespread use of the Internet, cell phones, and various social-networking media generates major challenges for an authoritarian government intent on maintaining control through state-mandated divisions.¹²² Yet evidence to date suggests that the state propaganda system has proven remarkably skillful at adapting to the obstacles and opportunities posed by new communications technology.¹²³ Microblogs and online bulletin boards have become the means for disgruntled citizens to vent their frustrations in a fashion readily susceptible to state surveillance and intervention.

Revolutionary authoritarianism demands active engagement (rather than “exit”) by society—in a manner authorized by the state. People are encouraged to express “voice” as well as “loyalty,”¹²⁴ so long as they play by the official rules of the game. For these reasons, although protest in Communist China has been more frequent and widespread than in other authoritarian settings, ultimately it has proven less politically destabilizing.¹²⁵ Precisely because protest in the PRC is both routine and officially circumscribed, once the top leadership decides resolutely on a course of repression most of the populace is quick to fall into step—with concerns for stability rapidly overshadowing the euphoria of public criticism. The crackdown on Tiananmen protesters in 1989 or Falun gong demonstrators a decade later was after all a familiar drill—harking back to the Anti-rightist Campaign of 1957, the military suppression of Cultural Revolution mass activism in 1969, the clearing of Tiananmen Square in April 1976, and the clampdown on Democracy Wall in 1979. In China, unlike Eastern Europe or the former Soviet Union, both leaders and ordinary citizens know how to put the genie of mass protest back into the bottle of state socialism.

One might well ask whether this is only a temporary situation now that educated engineers rather than experienced revolutionaries occupy Zhongnanhai.¹²⁶ Has the revolutionary tradition lost its intrinsic *value* for contemporary Chinese, rulers and ruled alike, much as Joseph R. Levenson argued was the fate of the Confucian tradition a century ago?¹²⁷ Will today’s Communist reformers find it as impossible to cling to their discredited traditions as the Qing self-strengtheners once did? Just as the abolition of the Confucian examinations as the route to officialdom was a clear acknowledgment of bureaucratic weakness and moral bankruptcy in 1905, so today one might suggest that the CCP’s abandonment of selective admissions criteria in favor of an open-door policy that welcomes even capitalists into the Communist Party is a clear acknowledgment of its own moribund condition. The spectacular demise of Bo Xilai’s once famed “Chongqing model,” which combined explicit adherence to Maoist ideology with crime busting and social welfare, may discourage this instrumental use of the revolutionary tradition by future ambitious princelings.

It is entirely possible that the engineers responsible for running the train of Chinese Communism will eventually discover that they cannot proceed full steam ahead along an outmoded set of rails. Advanced economic development may indeed demand new political arrangements that afford far greater autonomy to legal institutions and civil society. Absent a willingness on the part of its leadership to risk the consequences of such a political transformation, the PRC could devolve into a run-of-the-mill authoritarianism that dispenses with both the ideological and the organizational features of its revolutionary past. Alternatively, and more worrisome still, the new leadership could choose to further highlight the nationalistic implications of China's revolutionary tradition to develop a militaristic or quasi-fascist version of authoritarianism with deleterious domestic and international consequences. Even were such transitions to other variants of authoritarianism to occur, however, we would still be well advised to cast a more discerning eye back on the past thirty-five years in an effort to understand the political basis of the extraordinary, and quite unanticipated, accomplishments of the post-Mao polity. Tarnished as those achievements have been by repeated demonstrations of deplorable state brutality, as well as by egregious and increasing social inequity, their explanation nevertheless presents a major challenge to the field of Chinese politics. That challenge, I would submit, cannot be fully met by conventional comparisons with other countries (whether postcommunist, "classic" authoritarian, or developmental), nor by recourse to general theories of regime transition and democratization.¹²⁸ For better *and* worse, China has not yet bid farewell to revolution.

Notes

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¹ This essay is a revised and updated version of an article of the same title that appeared in *China Journal*, no. 57 (January 2007): 1–22. © 2007 Australian National University. All rights reserved.

² Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951). Schwartz argued—in stark opposition to the conventional wisdom of the day—that “the political strategy of Mao Tse-tung was not planned in advance in Moscow, and even ran counter to tenets of orthodoxy which were still considered sacrosanct and inviolate in Moscow” (5). In particular, Schwartz emphasized Mao's embrace of a “purely peasant mass base” (188–204) as the heart of his distinctive approach.

³ Emblematic of this approach was Richard L. Walker's *China under Communism: The First Five Years*. Published by Yale University Press in 1955, Walker's book portrayed Mao's China as a brutal totalitarian dictatorship modeled closely on Stalin's Soviet Union, in which overwhelming regime terror had effectively sapped the populace of any capacity for independence or resistance. Describing the PRC as “apeing the Soviet ‘big brother,’” Walker noted with evident nostalgia for the pre-Communist past that—in the wake of Mao's revolution—“specialists on Communism, not Sinologists [are] better qualified to analyze events within the land which once hailed Confucius as its great teacher.” Richard L. Walker, *China under Communism: The First Five Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), xi–xii.

⁴ Stuart R. Schram wrote in 1963 that “when Mao Tse-tung came to power, it was widely suggested, first, that he would be a faithful puppet of Moscow, and secondly, that the evolution of communist China would necessarily be a copy of Russia's evolution. Today everyone recognizes that the first of these hypotheses was false.” Stuart R. Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Praeger, 1963), 73.

⁵ See, for example, Stuart R. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1966); Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Communism and China: Ideology in Flux* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968); Robert Jay Lifton, *Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1968); Michel Oksenberg, *China: The Convulsive Society* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1970); Richard H. Solomon, *Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); John Bryan Starr, *Continuing the Revolution: The Political Thought of Mao* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972); Lucian W. Pye, *Mao Tse-tung: The Man in the Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 1976); Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1979); Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, vols. 1–3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974–97).

⁶ The most comprehensive and sophisticated such effort was Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

⁷ John King Fairbank, *The Great Chinese Revolution, 1800–1985* (New York: Harper and Row, 1986), 11.

⁸ This substantial literature includes contributions by Chalmers Johnson, Mark Selden, Roy Hofheinz, Robert Marks, Ralph Thaxton, Chen Yung-fa, Ilpyong Kim, Tetsuya Kataoka, Stephen Averill, Gregor Benton, Pauline Keating, David Goodman, and Elizabeth Perry among others. A useful review of much of this literature can be found in the editors' introduction to Kathleen Hartford and Steven M. Goldstein, eds., *Single Sparks: China's Rural Revolutions* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1985).

⁹ Harding, "From China, with Disdain: New Trends in the Study of China," *Asian Survey* 22, no. 10 (October 1982): 934–58.

¹⁰ Especially important was Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

¹¹ See, for example, Julia C. Strauss, *Strong Institutions in Weak Politics: State Building in Republican China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Mark W. Frazier, *The Making of the Chinese Industrial Workplace: State, Revolution, and Labor Management* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Elizabeth J. Remick, *Building Local States: China during the Republican and Post-Mao Eras* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004); Elizabeth J. Perry, *Patrolling the Revolution: Worker Militias, Citizenship, and the Modern Chinese State* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).

¹² See, among many others, Melanie Manion, "The Electoral Connection in the Chinese Countryside," *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 4 (December 1996): 736–48; Daniel Kelliher, "The Chinese Debate over Village Self-Government," *China Journal*, no. 37 (1997): 63–86; Anne F. Thurston, *Muddling towards Democracy: Political Change in Grassroots China* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace, 1998); Jean C. Oi, *Rural China Takes Off: Institutional Foundations of Economic Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Shi Tianjian, "Voting and Nonvoting in China," *Journal of Politics* 61, no. 4 (November 1999): 1115–39; Shi Tianjian, "Village Committee Elections in China," *World Politics* 51, no. 3 (April 1999): 385–412; Shi Tianjian, "Economic Development and Village Elections in Rural China," in *China and Democracy: The Prospect for a Democratic China*, ed. Zhao Suisheng (New York: Routledge, 2000), 233–52; Kevin J. O'Brien and Li Lianjiang, "Accommodating 'Democracy' in a One-Party State," *China Quarterly*, no. 162 (June 2000): 465–89; Jean C. Oi and Scott Rozelle, "Elections and Power: The Locus of Decision-Making in Chinese Villages," *China Quarterly*, no. 162 (June 2000): 513–39; Robert Pastor and Qingshan Tan, "The Meaning of Chinese Village Elections," *China Quarterly*, no. 162 (June 2000): 490–512; Susan H. Whiting, *Power and Wealth in Rural China: The Political Economy of Institutional Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Yang Zhong and Jie Chen, "To Vote or Not to Vote: An Analysis of Peasants Participation in Chinese Village Elections," *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 6 (August 2002): 686–712; Li Lianjiang, "The Empowering Effect of Village Elections in China," *Asian Survey* 43, no. 4 (July–August 2003): 648–62; and Elizabeth J. Perry and Merle Goldman, eds., *Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

¹³ In a state of the field review, Lowell Dittmer and William Hurst observe that "the substantive focus of the China field has shifted in recent years (though regrettably so) away from analysis of the state—at least of the central Party-state apparatus." See their "Analysis in Limbo: Contemporary Chinese Politics Amid the Maturation of Reform," *Issues and Studies* 39, no. 1 (March 2003): 13. Similarly, Richard Baum and Alexei Shevchenko call attention to a "paradigm gap" in the contemporary Chinese politics field. See their "The 'State of the State,'" in *The Paradox of China's Post-Mao Reforms*, ed. Merle Goldman and Roderick MacFarquhar (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 333–60.

¹⁴ Nee and David Stark, eds., *Remaking the Economic Institutions of Socialism: China and Eastern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Wu Yu-shan, *Comparative Economic Transformations: Mainland China, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and Taiwan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994); Andrew G. Walder, ed., *The Waning of the*

Communist State: Economic Origins of Political Decline in China and Hungary (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Edwin A. Winckler, ed., *Transition from Communism in China: Institutional and Comparative Analyses* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999).

¹⁵ Among many others, see R. M. Classman, *China in Transition: Communism, Capitalism, and Democracy* (New York: Praeger, 1991); Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Gordon White, Jude Howell, and Shang Xiaoyuan, *In Search of Civil Society: Market Reform and Social Change in Contemporary China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Timothy Brook and B. Michael Frolic, eds., *Civil Society in China* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997); Baogang He, *The Democratic Implications of Civil Society in China* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Suzanne Ogden, *Inklings of Democracy in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002); Guo Xiaoqin, *State and Society in China's Democratic Transition* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Bruce Gilley, *China's Democratic Future* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); and Qiusa Ma, *Non-governmental Organizations in Contemporary China: Paving the Way to Civil Society?* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

¹⁶ On the early post-Mao experiments in political reform, see Merle Goldman, *Sowing the Seeds of Democracy in China: Political Reform in the Deng Xiaoping Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994); and Shiping Zheng, *Party versus State in Post-1949 China: The Institutional Dilemma* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). On stalled political reform, see Joseph Fewsmith, *China since Tiananmen: The Politics of Transition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹⁷ Edward S. Steinfeld, *Forging Reform in China: The Fate of State-Owned Industry* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jean C. Oi and Andrew G. Walder, eds., *Property Rights and Economic Reform in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

¹⁸ Lu Xiaobo, *Cadres and Corruption: The Organizational Involvement of the Chinese Communist Party* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); David C. Kang, *Crony Capitalism: Corruption and Development in South Korea and the Philippines* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Melanie Manion, *Corruption by Design: Building Clean Government in Mainland China and Hong Kong* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Yan Sun, *Corruption and Market in Contemporary China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

¹⁹ A positive assessment of Chinese state capacity is Dali L. Yang, *Remaking the Chinese Leviathan: Market Transition and the Politics of Governance in China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004); a negative assessment is Wang Shaoguang, "The Problem of State Weakness," *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 3 (2003): 36–42. On the importance of state-led economic growth in developing countries more generally, see Atul Kohli, *State-Directed Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁰ Michel Oksenberg noted presciently in 1999 that "such previous depictions as 'totalitarianism,' a 'Leninist party state,' 'fragmented authoritarianism,' 'soft authoritarianism' or 'bureaucratic pluralism' miss the complexity of China's state structure on the eve of the twenty first century." Michel Oksenberg, "China's Political System: Challenges of the Twenty First Century," paper prepared for the Keio University International Symposium (December 1999). A useful effort to evaluate the integrative capacity of the Chinese Communist state is Barry J. Naughton and Dali L. Yang, eds., *Holding China Together: Diversity and National Integration in the Post-Deng Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²¹ Andrew G. Walder observes, "The longer China continues along its current trajectory of change, the less relevant are the prior examples of collapse and regime change in Eastern Europe and the USSR." Andrew G. Walder, "The Party Elite and China's Trajectory of Change," *China: An International Journal* 2, no. 2 (September 2004): 190.

²² Pei Minxin, *From Reform to Revolution: The Demise of Communism in China and the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

²³ Pei Minxin refers to the Chinese pattern as “developmental autocracy.” See his *China’s Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

²⁴ Chalmers A. Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982); Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Robert Wade, *Governing the Market: Economic Theory and the Role of Government in East Asian Industrialization* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

²⁵ Some, such as Oi (in *Rural China Takes Off*), have therefore attempted to apply the model at the level of the local rather than the national Chinese state. In addition to size, however, there are other important differences between the PRC and the Four Little Tigers; for example, Chinese economic development has involved far greater foreign investment than was true for its East Asian neighbors. Mary Elizabeth Gallagher, *Contagious Capitalism: Globalization and the Politics of Labor in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 6–7; Yasheng Huang, *Selling China: Foreign Direct Investment during the Reform Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

²⁶ Between 1980 and 1990, among 122 countries China’s average economic growth rate was second highest and India’s was eleventh. Between 1990 and 2000, China’s was again second highest—among 140 countries—while India ranked tenth. T. N. Srinivasan, “Economic Reforms and Global Integration,” in *The India-China Relationship*, ed. Francine Frankel and Harry Harding (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 236.

²⁷ This is not surprising, inasmuch as larger cross-national studies have been unable to establish a significant correlation between either authoritarian or democratic regimes and economic growth. Adam Przeworski Michael E. Alvarez, Jose Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi, *Democracy and Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁸ Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India’s Growing Crisis of Governability* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

²⁹ Srinivasan, “Economic Reforms and Global Integration,” 245, 259.

³⁰ Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 85.

³¹ Jagdish Bhagwati, *India in Transition: Freeing the Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 20–21.

³² Nicholas R. Lardy, *Agriculture in Modern China’s Economic Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

³³ Bhagwati, *India in Transition*, 36.

³⁴ Dreze and Sen, *India*, 85–86.

³⁵ Rhoads Murphey, *The Fading of the Maoist Vision: City and Country in China’s Development* (New York: Methuen, 1980), 54–55.

- ³⁶ On Mao's stated commitment to these goals, see Stuart Schram, ed., *Chairman Mao Talks to the People: Talks and Letters, 1956–1971* (New York: Pantheon, 1974), 197–233; on the implementation via mass campaigns, see Michel C. Oksenberg, *Policy Formulation in China: The Case of the 1957–1958 Water Conservancy Campaign* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1969); and Charles P. Cell, *Revolution at Work: Mobilization Campaigns in China* (New York: Academic Press, 1977).
- ³⁷ John King Fairbank, *The United States and China*, 4th ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 449.
- ³⁸ Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, “Fiftieth Anniversary Conference Proposal,” December 2005.
- ³⁹ Li Zehou and Liu Zaifu, *Gaobie geming: Huiwang ershibiji Zhongguo* [Farewell to revolution: Looking back on twentieth-century China] (Hong Kong: Tiandi Book Company, 1997).
- ⁴⁰ Fairbank, *The Great Chinese Revolution*, 351.
- ⁴¹ Barrington Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); Eric R. Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Jeffery M. Paige, *Agrarian Revolution* (New York: Free Press, 1975); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
- ⁴² Dorothy J. Solinger, *State's Gains, Labor's Losses* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), xi–xii.
- ⁴³ Valerie J. Bunce and Karrie J. Koesel, “Dictatorships in Collaboration: Chinese and Russian Efforts to Stop Democratic Change” (unpublished paper).
- ⁴⁴ The opening of the Soviet archives in recent years has rekindled old debates about the extent to which the Chinese revolution simply replicated the Russian exemplar. For a partisan view that insists on Soviet direction over virtually all aspects of the Chinese revolution, see Alexander Pantsov, *The Bolsheviks and the Chinese Revolution, 1919–1927* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000). A more balanced picture, which argues for considerable autonomy and innovation on the part of the Chinese, is presented in S. A. Smith, *A Road Is Made: Communism in Shanghai, 1920–27* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000).
- ⁴⁵ Oi, *Rural China Takes Off*; Whiting, *Power and Wealth in Rural China*.
- ⁴⁶ A recent effort to explain elite dynamics under Mao (and Deng) in game-theoretic terms is Huang Jing, *Factionalism in Chinese Communist Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000). For textbook overviews of both Maoist and post-Mao systems, see Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform*, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004); William A. Joseph, *Politics in China: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); and Tony Saich, *Politics and Governance of China*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
- ⁴⁷ On Qing expansion, see Peter Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005). On the fragility of China's geographic, political, and cultural unity, see James E. Sheridan, *China in Disintegration* (New York: Free Press, 1975); and Edward Friedman, *National Identity and Democratic Prospects in Socialist China* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1995).
- ⁴⁸ Andrew J. Nathan, “Authoritarian Resilience,” *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 1 (2003): 6.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 14–15.

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⁵³ Dorothy J. Solinger, “Urban Entrepreneurs and the State,” in *State and Society in China: The Consequences of Reform*, ed. Arthur Lewis Rosenbaum (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992); Margaret M. Pearson, *China's New Business Elite: The Political Consequences of Economic Reform* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

⁵⁴ Bruce J. Dickson, *Red Capitalists in China: The Party, Private Entrepreneurs, and Prospects for Political Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Kellee S. Tsai, *Capitalism without Democracy: The Private Sector in Contemporary China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).

⁵⁵ Ching Kwan Lee, “The Revenge of History: Collective Memories and Labor Protests in Northeastern China,” *Ethnography* 1, no. 2 (December 2000): 217–37; Ching Kwan Lee, “From the Specter of Mao to the Spirit of the Law: Labor Insurgency in China,” *Theory and Society* 31 (April 2002): 189–228; Chen Feng, “Subsistence Crisis, Managerial Corruption and Labor Protests in China,” *China Journal*, no. 44 (July 2000): 41–63; William Hurst and Kevin J. O'Brien, “China's Contentious Pensioners,” *China Quarterly*, no. 170 (June 2002): 345–60; Cai Yongshun, “The Resistance of Chinese Laid-off Workers in the Reform Period,” *China Quarterly*, no. 170 (June 2002): 327–44.

⁵⁶ Ching Kwan Lee, “Pathways of Labour Insurgency,” in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance*, ed. Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 71–92; William Hurst, *The Chinese Worker after Socialism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

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⁵⁸ Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J. Perry, eds., *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

⁵⁹ Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard, “Management of Party Cadres in China,” in *Bringing the Party Back In: How China Is Governed*, ed. Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard and Zheng Yongnian (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2004), 57–91.

⁶⁰ Barry J. Naughton and Dali L. Yang, eds., *Holding China Together: Diversity and National Integration in the Post-Deng Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 9. On the importance of the *nomenklatura* system during the 1980s, see Yasheng Huang, *Inflation and Investment Controls in China: The Political Economy of Central-Local Relations during the Reform Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁶¹ Walder, “The Party Elite and China's Trajectory of Change,” 194.

⁶² Ibid., 195–97.

⁶³ Hong Yung Lee, *From Revolutionary Cadres to Party Technocrats in Socialist China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Melanie Manion, *Retirement of Revolutionaries in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

⁶⁴ Nathan, “Authoritarian Resilience,” 16.

⁶⁵ Critiques of the totalitarian model as a characterization of Mao’s China include Vivienne Shue, *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); and Andrew G. Walder, *Communist Neo-Traditionalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

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⁶⁷ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 92–93.

⁶⁸ James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

⁶⁹ Chen Yung-fa, *Making Revolution: The Communist Movement in Eastern and Central China, 1937–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

⁷⁰ Ibid., 11.

⁷¹ Ibid., 517. Similarly, Edward Friedman refers to Mao’s style of rule as “war communism” (*National Identity and Democratic Prospects*, 208–9).

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⁷³ Elaboration of this argument can be found in Elizabeth J. Perry, “Shanghai’s Strike Wave of 1957,” *China Quarterly*, no. 137 (March 1994); and Elizabeth J. Perry and Li Xun, *Proletarian Power: Shanghai in the Cultural Revolution* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997).

⁷⁴ Mao’s effort to reconcile the ideological vision of nationalism with the instrumental tactics of polarization can be seen in his 1938 essay “The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War,” in *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tsetung* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1971), 138–59. On mass campaigns in the PRC, see Gordon A. Bennett, *Yundong: Mass Campaigns in Chinese Communist Leadership* (Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, University of California, 1976).

⁷⁵ Dorothy J. Solinger, *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

⁷⁶ Lily L. Tsai, *Accountability without Democracy: Solidary Groups and Public Goods Provision in Rural China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Benjamin L. Read, *Roots of the State: Neighborhood Organization and Social Networks in Beijing and Taipei* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012); John A. Donaldson, *Small Works: Poverty and Economic Development in Southwest China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011); Mark W. Frazier, *Socialist Insecurity: Pensions and the Politics of Uneven Development in China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010).

⁷⁷ Elizabeth J. Perry, “To Rebel Is Justified: Cultural Revolution Influences on Contemporary Chinese Protest,” in *Beyond Purge and Holocaust: The Chinese Cultural Revolution Reconsidered*, ed. Kam-ye Law (New York: Palgrave Press, 2003).

⁷⁸ Notable examples include Deng Xiaoping and the Democracy Wall movement of 1978–79, Hu Yaobang and the student protests of 1986–87, Zhao Ziyang and the Tiananmen unrest of 1989, and Hu Jintao and anti-Japanese demonstrations in 1999 and later. See my introduction to Elizabeth J. Perry, *Challenging the Mandate of Heaven: Social Protest and State Power in China* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2002).

⁷⁹ Sebastian Heilmann, “The Social Context of Mobilization in China: Factions, Work Units, and Activists during the 1976 April Fifth Movement,” *China Information* 8 (Winter 1993–94): 1–19.

⁸⁰ On the mechanics of state suppression, see Murray Scot Tanner, *Chinese Government Responses to Rising Social Unrest* (Santa Monica: Rand, 2005); and Timothy Brook, *Quelling the People: The Military Suppression of the Beijing Democracy Movement* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

⁸¹ Interviews by the author, Shanghai, January 1987. That workers and intellectuals continue to experience markedly different treatment at the hands of state authorities (and in the eyes of the public) was demonstrated graphically by the infamous Sun Zhigang case in 2003. Sun, a university graduate who was traveling without identification papers, was arrested when the police mistook him for a migrant laborer. After Sun was beaten to death while in police custody, the media, intellectual commentators, and state officials all made much of the fact that a university graduate had been treated so terribly. Had Sun been an uneducated migrant worker, as the police originally suspected, his brutal death would surely not have elicited the same public outcry.

⁸² Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, “The Year of Living Anxiously: China’s 1999,” *Dissent*, 47, no. 2 (Spring 2002); Perry, *Challenging the Mandate of Heaven*, “Introduction.”

⁸³ *Notice on Various Issues Regarding Identifying and Banning of Cultic Organizations* (Beijing: Ministry of Public Security of the People’s Republic of China, 2000), reprinted in “Religion and Public Security in China, 1999–2002,” *Chinese Law and Government*, 36, no. 2 (2003): 98–100.

⁸⁴ *Renmin ribao* [People’s daily], September 3, 2003.

⁸⁵ “President Hu Jintao Calls for a ‘People’s War’ Against SARS,” *Xinhua Report* (Tianjin), May 1, 2003, translated in *Chinese Law and Government*, 36, no. 4 (July–August 2003): 44; Joseph Kahn, “The SARS Epidemic,” *New York Times*, April 25, 2003; Elisabeth Rosenthal, “SARS Makes Beijing Combat an Old but Unsanitary Habit,” *New York Times*, May 28, 2003.

⁸⁶ Over thirty thousand people were quarantined with official government approval, but many others were placed under unauthorized quarantine by their local neighborhood committees. On the official process, see Pang Xingguo et al., “Evaluation of Control Measures Implemented in the SARS Outbreak in Beijing, 2003,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 290, no. 24 (December 24–31, 2003): 3215–21. For the unofficial situation, see Taru Salmenkari, “SARS Prevention Campaign and the Limits of Media Mobilization,” unpublished paper.

⁸⁷ *Renmin ribao* [People's daily], July 4, 14, 29, and 30, 2003.

⁸⁸ Tony Saich, "Is SARS China's Chernobyl or Much Ado About Nothing?," in *SARS in China: Prelude to Pandemic?*, ed. Arthur Kleinman and James L. Watson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 89.

⁸⁹ Joan Kaufman, "SARS and China's Health-Care Response: Better to Be Both Red and Expert!," in *SARS in China: Prelude to Pandemic?*, ed. Arthur Kleinman and James L. Watson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 66–67.

⁹⁰ Pang Xingguo et al., "Evaluation of Control Measures Implemented in the SARS Outbreak," 3221.

⁹¹ Interviews by the author at Jinggangshan, Jiangxi in summer 2005.

⁹² Elizabeth J. Perry, *Anyuan: Mining China's Revolutionary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), chapter 7.

⁹³ Elizabeth J. Perry, "From Mass Campaigns to Managed Campaigns: Constructing a New Socialist Countryside," in *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China*, ed. Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J. Perry (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011): 30–61.

⁹⁴ *Xinhua wang*, www.news.cn (November 29, 2012).

⁹⁵ *South China Morning Post*, September 20, 2012.

⁹⁶ *Laodong tiaojian zui cha, gongzuo zui jianku, zui weixian, dui guojia he qiye gongxian zui da de pingkuang tuixiu zhibigong tuixiu yanglaojin dixia* [The dwindling pensions of retired Pingxiang miners whose labor conditions were the worst, whose work was the most difficult and dangerous, yet whose contribution to country and enterprise was the greatest], unpublished manifesto (Anyuan, Jiangxi: 2004).

⁹⁷ For the revolutionary history of the worker pickets, see Perry, *Patrolling the Revolution*.

⁹⁸ Feng Chen, "Industrial Restructuring and Workers' Resistance in China," *Modern China* no. 2 (April 2003): 250. In the countryside as well, there are reports of unruly militias challenging state authority. See, for example, *China Focus* 6, no. 9 (September 1, 1998): 4.

⁹⁹ An elaboration of this argument can be found in Perry, *Anyuan*.

¹⁰⁰ Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*; Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Rhetoric, and Symbols in Contemporary Syria* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

¹⁰¹ Patricia M. Thornton, "Framing Dissent in Contemporary China: Irony, Ambiguity, and Metonymy," *China Quarterly*, no. 171 (September 2002): 661–81.

¹⁰² Sebastian Heilmann, "'Turning Away from the Cultural Revolution: Political Grass-Roots Activism in the Mid-Seventies,'" Center for Pacific Asia Studies, Stockholm University, Occasional Papers, no. 28, September 1996, 11–13.

¹⁰³ Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

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- ¹⁰⁵ Andrew G. Walder, "Urban Industrial Workers: Some Observations on the 1980s," in *State and Society in China: The Consequences of Reform*, ed. Arthur Lewis Rosenbaum (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), 104.
- ¹⁰⁶ Wang Shaoguang, "Deng Xiaoping's Reform and the Chinese Workers' Participation in the Protest Movement of 1989," *Research in Political Economy* 13 (1992): 163–97.
- ¹⁰⁷ Jack A. Goldstone, "Analyzing Rebellion and Revolution: A Reply to the Critics," *Contention*, 3 (1994): 177–98.
- ¹⁰⁸ Liu Xiaobo, "That Holy Word, 'Revolution,'" in *Popular Protest and Political Culture in Modern China*, ed. Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom and Elizabeth J. Perry, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1994), 315, 318.
- ¹⁰⁹ Kevin O'Brien and Li Lianjiang, *Rightful Resistance in the Chinese Countryside* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For a more cautious assessment of contemporary rural protest, noting the continuities with peasant unrest in previous periods of Chinese history, see Thomas P. Bernstein and Xiaobo Lu, *Taxation without Representation in Contemporary Rural China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
- ¹¹⁰ David Zweig, "To the Courts or to the Barricades: Can New Political Institutions Manage Rural Conflict?" in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance*, ed. Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 132.
- ¹¹¹ Pei Minxin, "Rights and Resistance," in *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict, and Resistance*, ed. Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 40–43. See also Pei Minxin, "Citizens v. Mandarins: Administrative Litigation in China," *China Quarterly*, no. 152 (December 1997): 832–62.
- ¹¹² Merle Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen: The Struggle for Political Rights in China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 222–23.
- ¹¹³ Merle Goldman, *Political Rights in Post-Mao China* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2007), 74.
- ¹¹⁴ Dexter Roberts, "Waking Up to Their Rights," *Business Week*, August 22–29, 2005, 123.
- ¹¹⁵ David Shambaugh, "The Chinese State in the Post-Mao Era," in *The Modern Chinese State*, ed. David Shambaugh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 183.
- ¹¹⁶ X. L. Ding, *The Decline of Communism in China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 200.
- ¹¹⁷ Minxin Pei, *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), page 13.
- ¹¹⁸ There is, of course, a serious issue about the meaning of the Chinese term *quanli* (rights). Stephen C. Angle delineates what he characterizes as "a distinctive Chinese discourse about rights" in his illuminating book *Human Rights and Chinese Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹¹⁹ On the limited scope of these legal reforms, see Stanley Lubman, *Bird in a Cage: Legal Reform in China after Mao* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

¹²⁰ In a related vein, the German sinologist Harro Von Senger noted some years ago, “In the PRC statutory law thus does not serve the function of an autonomous force for shaping the social order, independent of the CCP Party norms. It serves rather as a vehicle for making casuistic elaborations to Party norms and their translation into guiding principles which are compulsory for all citizens of the PRC.” Harro Von Senger, “Recent Developments in the Relations between State and Party Norms in the People’s Republic of China,” in *The Scope of State Power in China*, ed. Stuart R. Schram (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989), 207. For more on “rules consciousness,” see Elizabeth J. Perry, “Popular Protest: Playing by the Rules,” in *China Today, China Tomorrow: Domestic Politics, Economy, and Society*, ed. Joseph Fewsmith (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010): 11–28.

¹²¹ Su Shaozhi remarks ruefully that “Chinese society has long been characterized by state worship.” See his “Problems of Democratic Reform in China,” in *The Politics of Democratization: Generalizing East Asian Experiences*, ed. Edward Friedman (Boulder: Westview, 1994), 223. Examples of “rules-conscious” protests in the Maoist era can be found in Perry, “Shanghai’s Strike Wave of 1957”; and Perry and Li, *Proletarian Power*.

¹²² Guobin Yang, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

¹²³ Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008); Yuezhi Zhao, *Communication in China: Political Economy, Power, and Conflict* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

¹²⁴ Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

¹²⁵ Elizabeth J. Perry, “Continuities and Discontinuities in Chinese Protest,” in *Popular Protest in China*, ed. Kevin O’Brien (Harvard University Press, 2008): 205–215.

¹²⁶ On the changing of the elite guard, see Li Cheng, *China’s Leaders: The New Generation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001).

¹²⁷ Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

¹²⁸ It seems more than coincidental, however, that all of the other remaining communist regimes—those of Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, and Laos—share with China a legacy of nationalistic rural revolution. This suggests a promising avenue for the comparative study of “communist resilience.”

Literature: Early China

Martin Kern

Definition of the Field

Since the 1970s, the study of early China has experienced impressive growth in North America, especially the United States but to a lesser extent also Canada. Thirty years ago few of the major institutions had specialists for early China, and those in the field were mostly focused on transmitted texts. By now the situation has completely changed. Scholars of early China occupy positions around the country, and few institutions have two or more such specialists on their faculty. Moreover, the field maintains its own journal, *Early China*, which was founded in 1975 as the annual publication of the Society for the Study of Early China. In addition, the Society publishes the Early China Special Monograph Series and maintains the highly informative Early China website.¹

In the development of the early China field, much of the attention has shifted to the study of bronze inscriptions and excavated manuscripts, and here especially to the study of early history, intellectual history, and religion. As is often the case for ancient civilizations, these fields are closely interrelated, and literature is closely connected to all of them; strictly speaking, there is no defined field of “early Chinese literature” that could be separated from the study of Chinese antiquity altogether. It lies in the nature of ancient societies that they require integrated, interdisciplinary research instead of isolated approaches guided by modern categories such as “history,” “religion,” or “literature.” However, in the present survey, I nevertheless attempt to isolate “literature” (in the more narrow sense) from the other subfields in the study of early China (history, philosophy, religion, etc.) that are dealt with in other parts of the present book. In doing so, I am not asking “What is literature?” but instead, “What do we recognize and study as literature?”

Literature in its broadest sense includes all forms of texts. In a first attempt to narrow this definition, we normally focus on all forms of aesthetically shaped writings—what the Chinese tradition calls *wen* 文—that is, texts with significant features that cannot be reduced to the mere expression of information. In this view, a list of bureaucratic titles is not literature, but a Western Zhou bronze inscription, showing (however irregular) use of rhyme and tetrasyllabic meter, is a work of literature and even poetry. Eloquent historical and philosophical writing, for example, in the *Shiji* or *Zhuangzi*, qualifies as literature—and should be studied with close attention to literary form!—and so might a Western Han imperial edict or memorial. By contrast, the most narrow or pure sense of literature in the modern sense of “literary art” does not apply to any text in early China, nor would it to the texts of other ancient civilizations.

Instead of following a particular definition, the following survey will proceed from the actual North American literary scholarship of early China in order to illuminate important accomplishments

and recent trends. In this one can discern two different perspectives of research: specialists of early China study literary texts within their contemporaneous historical, religious, archaeological, and other contexts, while specialists of Chinese literature, often being more engaged with later periods, include particular early texts in their discussions of specific textual genres. For the first group of scholars, the *Shijing* is part of the intellectual world of its time and related to the Western Zhou ancestral ritual or the Warring States discourse on self-cultivation; its study forms an important part in the overall reevaluation of Chinese antiquity in light of our newly excavated sources. For the second group, the *Shijing* is part of the history of Chinese poetry that relates to the later poetic tradition. The two approaches are fundamentally different yet complementary, and some scholars are able to combine them.

The one distinct field that is directly pertinent to the study of literature but is itself a large and highly specialized area of research is Chinese linguistics. This area is further divided into studies of historical phonology, lexicology, paleography, and the origin and early characteristics of the Chinese writing system. Numerous studies have been published on all these topics, yet due to constraints of space, they cannot be accommodated here. Exceptions will be made only on the few occasions where a study specifically addresses a particular literary text under discussion.

To date there exists only a single book devoted to pre-Qin through Han literature, namely, Burton Watson's (Columbia University) 1962 monograph *Early Chinese Literature*.² This work was pioneering in its day but is now considerably dated, although it remains a useful general introduction to the scope of the field. Its first real update will appear in chapters 1 (Shang through Western Han) and 2 (Eastern Han through Jin) of *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*,³ (2010) written by Martin Kern (Princeton University) and David R. Knechtges (University of Washington), respectively.⁴ Knechtges is also the author of what will soon be the most important reference work for the field: a massive encyclopedic handbook of nearly eight hundred entries to provide reliable guidance on classical Chinese writings from antiquity to the Tang.⁵

Since the early twentieth century, many literary anthologies have been published—first in Europe and then, especially in the second half of the century, also in the United States. These include numerous translations of individual pieces of early Chinese literature that cannot be discussed in the present survey. Finally, not a few of the seminal English-language works that are still required reading in North American sinology were written in Europe and, of course, must be mentioned in this survey. On the other hand, more recent European writings, even in English, cannot be mentioned here.

History of the Field and Current Trends

Shijing

The academic study of Chinese literature began with European translations of the *Shijing*. Of these, the three most influential works of the late nineteenth and then the twentieth century were written in English and created in Europe. The first was James Legge's (Oxford University) study, translation, and philological annotation of the *Shijing*,⁶ published in 1871 as part of his rendering of the *Five Classics*, the *Four Books*, and other philosophical texts from early China. Legge broadly consulted the classical commentaries from the Han through the Qing but was particularly inclined to follow Zhu Xi's readings. The second major translation of the *Shijing*, also created in England, was Arthur

Waley's (School of Oriental Studies, London),⁷ published in 1937.⁸ Waley's translation, influenced by the French sociologist Marcel Granet's study of the *guofeng* 國風, *Fêtes et chansons anciennes de la Chine* (1919), minimized the philological apparatus and presented an eminently readable rendering of the *Shijing* in which the ancient songs appeared fresh and charming, ancient poetry in the best sense of the word. The third influential translation was Bernhard Karlgren's (Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, Stockholm), published in 1944–45 in the *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* in Sweden, and accompanied by Karlgren's meticulous *Glosses* on the *Shijing* between 1942 and 1946 in the same journal.⁹ To this day, these are the three constantly cited English translations of the *Shijing*; more than half a century after Karlgren's work, no subsequent translations, including Ezra Pound's extremely free poetic rendering in *The Classic Anthology Defined by Confucius*,¹⁰ have ever replaced them. Both Legge and Karlgren still serve as indispensable reference works for the philological study and historical scholarship of the *Shijing*.¹¹ Karlgren and Legge approached the *Shijing* primarily from the perspective of *jingxue* 經學 (Karlgren's translations especially are utterly disinterested in poetic beauty), but Waley, in addition to his unquestioned scholarly competence in philology and anthropology, treated the *Shijing* as ancient poetry that modern readers can not only study but also enjoy.

In addition to these translations, the study of the *Shijing* has been the most important field in early Chinese literature in North America. At the time of Karlgren's translation, James Robert Hightower (Harvard University) published two authoritative studies on the *Hanshi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 and *San jia shi* 三家詩 that are still unsurpassed.¹² George A. Kennedy (Yale University) wrote two brief yet meticulous analyses of metric features and the use of reduplicatives (*chongdie* 重疊) in the *Shijing*.¹³ In 1968, W. A. C. H. Dobson (University of Toronto) published a linguistic analysis of the *Shijing* where he also attempted to date its different sections;¹⁴ however, its somewhat mechanical discussion has not inspired much further research. The same is true for the rhetorical, to some extent even structuralist, work by William McNaughton on the language and style of the *Shijing*.¹⁵

Over the following two decades, a number of important studies explored the nature of the *Shijing* from comparative perspectives, sometimes reaching quite different conclusions. In 1969, Chen Shih-hsiang's 陳世驥 (University of California, Berkeley) seminal essay "The *Shih Ching*: Its Generic Significance in Chinese Literary History and Poetics" looked at the *Shijing* from the perspective of both comparative literature and anthropology, discussing the origins of the songs in the musical culture of high antiquity.¹⁶ C. H. Wang (University of Washington), in his 1974 book *The Bell and the Drum: Shih Ching as Formulaic Poetry in an Oral Tradition*, attempted to apply the Parry-Lord theory of oral folk composition to the *guofeng*.¹⁷ A similar approach was employed by Hans H. Frankel (Yale University) in his 1969 and 1974 studies of the *yuefu* "Kongque dongnan fei" 孔雀東南飛.¹⁸ While these ideas about formulaic oral poetry were popular around 1970, few scholars since then have followed up on reading Chinese poetry this way; more recently, Charles H. Egan (San Francisco State University) has convincingly rejected the "folk" and "oral" paradigms for early Chinese poetry.¹⁹ C. H. Wang's collection of essays *From Ritual to Allegory: Seven Essays in Early Chinese Poetry* continued the comparative approach through six inspiring studies of the *ya* 雅 and *song* 頌 sections of the *Shijing*,²⁰ proposing, among other original ideas, to read a series of *daya* 大雅 hymns as the "epic" of King Wen, which could be compared to the Homeric epics. By contrast, in her essay published in 1983, "Allegory, Allegoresis, and the *Classic of Poetry*,"²¹ Pauline Yu (president of the American Council of Learned Societies,

formerly of the University of California, Los Angeles) forcefully rejected the direct application of the critical terminology of the classical West—in this case, “allegory”—to poetry of classical China, showing instead how ancient Chinese philosophical and religious thought differed profoundly from its counterpart in the Mediterranean world and hence led to fundamentally different modes of poetry and poetic exegesis. Since then the comparative interpretation of early Chinese poetics in relation to the *Shijing* has led to studies of considerable theoretical and philosophical ambition: Haun Saussy’s (Yale University) 1993 book *The Problem of a Chinese Aesthetic*;²² Ming Dong Gu’s (Rhodes College) 2005 book on hermeneutics, especially with regard to *Shijing* and *Yijing*;²³ Gu’s discussion of the poetic principles of *fu*, *bi*, and *xing*;²⁴ and Wei-qun Dai’s (formerly University of Alberta) article on *Xing*.²⁵ In 2006, Tamara Chin (University of Chicago), wrote a comparative paper on mimesis in the *Shijing*.²⁶

Work devoted to ancient literary thought in relation to the *Shijing* began to become visible especially in the 1970s. Around the time of James J. Y. Liu’s (Stanford University) classic 1975 book *Chinese Theories of Literature*,²⁷ Chow Tse-tung (University of Wisconsin) authored two essays on the relation of early poetry to ancient music and philosophy.²⁸ Donald Holzman, an American teaching in Paris, wrote “Confucius and Ancient Chinese Literary Criticism” in 1978.²⁹ Thereafter, a number of studies on early aesthetic ideas—especially in relation to the “Great Preface”—have focused on the “Record of Music” 樂記 chapter of the *Liji* 禮記 and the “Discussion of Music” 樂論 chapter in *Xunzi* 荀子.³⁰ Stephen Owen’s (Harvard University) *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* contains a useful chapter on Warring States literary criticism.³¹

At the same time, the field of *Shijing* studies has produced a series of fine studies but no clear trends. In 1989 Joseph R. Allen (University of Minnesota) wrote perceptively on narrative poetry in the *Shijing*.³² Steven Van Zoeren’s (formerly Stanford University) 1991 book *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China* is a thoughtful study of the reception and interpretation of the *Shijing* from Han through Song times,³³ while William H. Baxter III’s (University of Michigan) *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology* has greatly advanced the understanding of ancient Chinese phonology and the *Shijing* rhyme system,³⁴ finally replacing the framework that Karlgren had erected during the first half of the twentieth century. Both Stephen Owen (Harvard University) and John Timothy Wixted (Arizona State University) have produced insightful discussions of the “Great Preface,”³⁵ Mark Laurent Asselin (formerly University of Washington) has shown how an Eastern Han *fu* reflects the Lu School reading of “Guanju,”³⁶ and essays by Haun Saussy (Yale University), Stephen Owen, and Dore J. Levy (Brown University) have examined the functions of rhyme and repetition in *Shijing* language, as well as the poetic principle of *fu* 賦, respectively.³⁷ David R. Knechtges (University of Washington) has written a short but eye-opening essay on the linguistic difficulties of the *Shijing* that should once and for all disabuse us of the common yet ignorant idea of “naturally reading” a *Shijing* song by choosing selectively whatever traditional or modern glosses one finds convenient.³⁸ Joseph R. Allen (University of Minnesota), in the postface to his 1996 edition of Arthur Waley’s *The Book of Songs*, has published a very useful “literary history” of the *Shijing*;³⁹ likewise, Michael Nylan’s (University of California, Berkeley) 2001 book *The Five “Confucian” Classics* includes a long chapter on the *Shijing* in the history of classical Chinese learning.⁴⁰ Peter Flueckiger (Pomona College), a scholar of Japanese literature, has recently written an insightful article, “The *Shijing* in Tokugawa Ancient Learning,” extending our research on *Shijing* reception history to Japan.⁴¹

If there is any particular trend, it might be that in recent years much (though not all) of *Shijing* studies has shifted to scholars of early China.⁴² The historian Edward L. Shaughnessy (University of Chicago) has proposed to interpret certain linguistic and literary differences in the *ya* and *song* hymns as reflections of the ritual changes during the Western Zhou.⁴³ Jeffrey K. Riegel (formerly University of California, Berkeley; now University of Sydney) has published an influential essay on the interpretation of “Guanju” 閔雎 and “Yanyan” 燕燕 in the Mawangdui “Wuxing” 五行 manuscript.⁴⁴ Mark Edward Lewis (Stanford University), in his 1999 book *Writing and Authority in Early China*, has written an important chapter on the uses of *Shijing* songs during the Eastern Zhou period;⁴⁵ in a way complementary to Lewis, Zhou Yiqun (Stanford University) has published a study on the practice of *fu shi* 賦詩 by women in early historiography.⁴⁶ Paul R. Goldin (University of Pennsylvania) has authored “Imagery of Copulation in Early Chinese Poetry,” largely devoted to the *Shijing*,⁴⁷ as well as “The Reception of the *Odes* in the Warring States Era.”⁴⁸ Finally, Martin Kern (Princeton University) has written a series of studies, published both in English and in Chinese, on the role of the *ya* and *song* in the formation of early Chinese ritual and cultural identity, on the appearance of *Shijing* quotations in excavated manuscripts, and on the early interpretation of the *guofeng*.⁴⁹ In addition to further studies on the *Shijing* in its early cultural context, Kern is preparing a new complete translation of the *Shijing*.

Altogether, *Shijing* studies in North America have left behind most of the more technical methodology that was to some extent important from the 1960s through the 1980s. Instead, the more recent work is often focused on particular problems of hermeneutics, the early reception of the text, and the particular questions that have arisen with the presence of *Shijing* fragments in excavated manuscripts. Later imperial *Shijing* scholarship is often drawn on but not studied as a subject in its own right.

Chuci

Compared to the study of the *Shijing*, work on the *Chuci* has been far more limited. Serious engagement with the text began in 1923 with Arthur Waley’s *The Temple and Other Poems*, which included not only translations but also an introduction on Chinese poetry and an appendix on its metrical forms.⁵⁰ The first essay of considerable influence by a North American sinologist was James Robert Hightower’s “Ch’ü Yüan Studies,” published in 1954, where Hightower critically reviewed early- and mid-twentieth-century Chinese scholarship on Qu Yuan.⁵¹ The next three significant works were all written in England. First came Arthur Waley’s 1955 interpretation of the “Nine Songs” as expressions of shamanistic practices;⁵² next, David Hawkes’s (Oxford University) translation of the *Chuci* anthology in 1959;⁵³ and third, in 1963, Angus C. Graham’s (University of London) study of *sao*-style prosody.⁵⁴ Soon thereafter, in 1967, Hawkes’s influential essay on the themes and language of the “Nine Songs” appeared.⁵⁵ In the 1970s, Chen Shih-hsiang published two studies on formal structures in the “Nine Songs” and on the expression of time in the *Chuci*.⁵⁶ Most importantly, in 1985 Hawkes published an updated second edition of his translation. It included a very substantial introduction where Hawkes discussed the history of the anthology, the Qu Yuan biography, and the linguistic features of the songs.⁵⁷

The only other book-length study of the *Chuci* also focused on the Nine Songs but from a radically different perspective: in 1985, Geoffrey R. Waters (formerly Indiana University) offered an introduction to the traditional political interpretation of the songs as it was first formulated in Eastern

Han times by the Wang Yi commentary.⁵⁸ No other scholar in North America has since pursued this reading, but it has remained an important reminder that the modern focus on “shamanism” was not always the way the ancient songs were interpreted.

To different degrees (with Hawkes’s writings remaining the most influential), these works published between 1955 and 1985 still define our current understanding of the *Chuci*. In addition, scholarship since then includes Stephen Field’s (Trinity University) translation of “Tian wen” 天問,⁵⁹ two comparative essays by C. H. Wang,⁶⁰ Pauline Yu’s reflections on the use of imagery in the *Chuci*,⁶¹ Paul W. Kroll’s (University of Colorado) outstanding translation and analysis of “Yuan you,”⁶² Tim Wai-Keung Chan’s (formerly University of Colorado, now Hong Kong Baptist University) study of the formation of the *Chuci* anthology and the authorship of its individual parts,⁶³ and Gopal Sukhu’s (Queen’s College, New York) account of the *Chuci* in Han times.⁶⁴

Altogether, there is no question that new work on numerous aspects of the *Chuci* is overdue. So far, no study has discussed any part of the text in relation to the newly excavated manuscripts, nor has there been sufficient work to integrate the text more fully with the intellectual and literary contexts of late Warring States and early Han times. Compared to the *Shijing*, as well as the Han *fu*, the *Chuci* is the least-studied corpus of early Chinese poetry in North American sinology today.

Han fu

The study of the Han *fu* in the West can almost entirely be summarized by the single name of David R. Knechtges (University of Washington) whose work stands next to the two or three leading *fu* scholars in Chinese academia over the past three decades. No other scholar anywhere in the West has covered the *fu*, and indeed Han literature in general, more authoritatively than Knechtges.

In the United States, the study of the Han *fu* began with three seminal essays by James Robert Hightower (Harvard University) and Hellmut Wilhelm (University of Washington) that are still required reading for anyone interested in the topic: Hightower’s studies on the *fu* of Jia Yi and Tao Qian (including a discussion of the *fu* by Dong Zhongshu and Sima Qian) and Wilhelm’s essay on the Western Han 士不遇賦 genre.⁶⁵ Like all of Hightower’s and Wilhelm’s works, these essays are masterpieces of historical and philological inquiry that have stood the test of time well; in this respect they are comparable to Legge’s and Karlgren’s work on the *Shijing*. Moreover, they set the tone for Knechtges’s extremely wide-ranging body of study and translation. As a result, the exploration of the Han *fu* has been the most painstakingly philological endeavor in all of North American studies of Chinese literature regardless of genre or period—and, considering the enormous linguistic difficulties of the genre, appropriately so.

The published work of David R. Knechtges in both English and Chinese already spans more than four decades, beginning with *Two Han Dynasty Fu on Ch’ü Yüan: Chia I’s “Tiao Ch’ü Yüan” and Yang Hsiung’s “Fan-sao,”*⁶⁶ in 1968, the year of Knechtges’s dissertation on Yang Xiong and the rhetoric of the Western Han *fu*.⁶⁷ This was followed by a translation of Yang Xiong’s *Hanshu* biography,⁶⁸ as well as two authoritative studies on Mei Sheng’s “Qi fa 七發,”⁶⁹ and on the rhetoric of Yang Xiong’s “Yulie fu” 羽獵賦,⁷⁰ before the publication of what to this day remains the best introduction to the Western Han *fu*, the monograph *The Han Rhapsody: A Study of the Fu of Yang Hsiung (53 B.C.-A.D. 18)*.⁷¹ In the

ensuing more than thirty years, Knechtges has written on virtually every aspect of the Han *fu* and its related topics, including on the pre-Han *fu* in *Xunzi* and on the *fu* in the Six Dynasties and the Tang (not to mention Knechtges's many publications on other topics).⁷² Most notable are the first three (of projected eight) volumes of his magisterial *Wenxuan* translation, which provide meticulously annotated translations of the complete *fu* section in the *Wenxuan* (chapters 1–19).⁷³ In addition, Knechtges is the editor and principal translator of Gong Kechang's *Studies on the Han fu*, which combines Gong Kechang's Chinese volume *Han fu Yanjiu* 漢賦研究 with the lectures he gave during his year as a visiting professor at the University of Washington.⁷⁴

While Knechtges's studies of the Han *fu* are focused on detailed historical and philological inquiry, translation, and extensive annotation, several other scholars have occasionally contributed to the field in their own ways. A valuable dissertation was written by Franklin N. Doeringer (1971).⁷⁵ In 1971 Burton Watson produced a very readable anthology of *fu* poetry;⁷⁶ in 1979 William T. Graham Jr. (formerly Ohio State University) published his study of Mi Heng's 禰衡 "Rhapsody on a Parrot" 鸚鵡賦;⁷⁷ in the mid-1980s, W. South Coblin (University of Iowa) wrote several linguistic studies related to the Han *fu*;⁷⁸ in 1986 Dore J. Levy discussed the poetic principle of *fu* as "enumeration";⁷⁹ in 1987, Donald Harper (University of Chicago), following his interest in the occult arts of ancient China, interpreted certain *fu* as religious spells in the southern religious tradition of Chu;⁸⁰ and in 1990, David W. Pankenier (Lehigh University) once again discussed the genre of the "frustrated scholar *fu*" (Shi buyu fu 士不遇賦).⁸¹ In 1993 Zhang Cangshou (Anqing Teachers College, Anhui) and Jonathan Pease (Portland State University) coauthored a study titled "Roots of the Han Rhapsody in Philosophical Prose," tracing the Han *fu* to Confucian and Daoist expository writing, and in addition to the rhetoricians (*zonghengjia* 縱橫家) from the Warring States.⁸² In 1997, an important dissertation on a series of late Eastern Han *fu* was completed by Mark Laurent Asselin at the University of Washington.⁸³ More recent contributions to Han *fu* studies, beyond David Knechtges' work, are more limited. Martin Kern (Princeton University) has discussed the aesthetics of moral persuasion in the Western Han *fu*, analyzed the authenticity of the Sima Xiangru biography in the *Shiji*, and argued that the Yauloe 要略 chapter of *Huainanzi* 淮南子 should be read as a Western Han *fu*.⁸⁴ Fusheng Wu (University of Utah) has reaffirmed the—already well-known—relation of the Han *fu* in Han epideictic rhetoric and imperial patronage.⁸⁵ Altogether, far more work has been done on Yang Xiong than on any other *fu* author.

Qin-Han Poetry and Literary Court Culture

The present survey includes the poetry of the Qin and Han dynasties, but it does not include the so-called "anonymous Han *yuefu*" and "Nineteen Old Poems" and also stops before the works of the Jian'an period (196–220). The reason for not including the "anonymous Han *yuefu*" is that few North American scholars who in recent years accept the bulk of anonymous *yuefu* collected as authentic Han works; instead, these texts, known to us only from Six Dynasties are usually—and also in the present volume—discussed in the context of Six Dynasties literature. The reason for stopping before the Jian'an period is that the poetry of that time, while nominally still belonging to the Han dynasty, marks a new departure, especially with the 建安七子, who flourished at the court of Cao Cao, *Seven Masters*

of *Jian'an* Period.

Much of Qin and Han poetry is closely related to the imperial court. An important essay in this context is Hellmut Wilhelm's (University of Washington) "The Bureau of Music of Western Han," published in 1978.⁸⁶ From the Qin, the only surviving poetic works are the stele inscriptions created during the reign of the Qin First Emperor; they have been the subject of a monograph by Martin Kern (Princeton University),⁸⁷ who is also the author of a book on the Western Han "Anshi fangzhong ge" and "Jiaosi ge" from the reigns of Han Gaozu and Han Wudi, respectively.⁸⁸ In addition, Kern wrote on the use of poetry in *Shiji* and *Hanshu*.⁸⁹ David R. Knechtges (University of Washington) has published several articles on Han poetry and court literature: on the literary production at the court of Han Wudi,⁹⁰ on court criticism in Han literature,⁹¹ and on the poetry of Ban Jieyu 班婕妤.⁹² Donald Holzman, an American working in Paris, studied the beginnings of pentasyllabic poetry in the Han.⁹³ Finally, Kenneth E. Brashier (Reed College) has contributed several careful literary and historical studies on Eastern Han stele inscriptions, which were often composed in the tradition of the *Shijing*.⁹⁴ All these studies are primarily defined by their strictly philological and historical approach. In addition, Brashier's work is thoroughly informed by the theory of memory, an important new subfield in Western cultural studies.

Altogether, research on Qin-Han poetry before the *Jian'an* period and excluding so-called anonymous Han *yuefu* and old-style poetry is limited partly because of the fairly small amount of short poetry that can be safely dated to the Han. However, there is still much more work to be done.

Philosophical and Historical Prose

Prose writing from early China can be roughly divided into several categories: historical and pseudo-historical texts, expository ("philosophical") writings, and accounts of technical knowledge. Many works from the first two categories have survived through the tradition, while most technical writing (on medicine, divination, calendarics, astrology, etc.) has not been preserved but has now begun to surface through archaeological excavations (and, sadly, the looting of tombs). While the technical writings have attracted much interest not only in China but also in the West, especially North America, they mostly lack particular literary form and have hence not inspired much literary analysis. Unfortunately, the literary features of excavated philosophical texts have also been neglected, and this despite the fact that they often display complex patterns of argumentation largely unknown in the received textual tradition.⁹⁵ By and large, the same situation extends to the transmitted philosophical writings of early China. Very few texts have attracted the kind of literary analysis that takes seriously the poetic modes and registers of language that pervade so much of early Chinese writing. The reason for this is that historians and intellectual historians of early China are not trained in the literary analysis of texts, with the unfortunate result that the aesthetic features of philosophical writings tend to be ignored. More often than not, poetic or otherwise aesthetically sophisticated language is considered an obstacle to the understanding of the argument—when in fact, as is obvious in works like *Zhuangzi* or *Huainanzi*, the philosophical argument can be fully understood only when taking its particular form of expression into consideration. To date, just a handful of recent studies can be noted: Lisa A. Raphals's (University of California, Riverside) studies on *Zhuangzi*, Harold D. Roth's (Brown University) book

on the “Neiye 内業” chapter in *Guanzi*, Sarah A. Queen’s (Connecticut College) and Martin Kern’s essays on *Huainanzi*, and David R. Knechtges’ study of the “Fu” chapter in *Xunzi*.⁹⁶ The fact that all these works are fairly recent gives hope that more are to follow in the future.

By contrast, the historical and pseudo-historical works of early China have been studied quite intensely from a literary perspective. In the process, the distinctions between “history” and “fiction” have been questioned consistently; this is not only true for the *Zhangguo ce* but also for *Zuo zhuan*, *Shiji*, *Guoyu*, and other texts that are traditionally read as historical. Thus, in the 1970s and 1980s, a series of studies by Hellmut Wilhelm (University of Washington), William H. Nienhauser Jr., (University of Wisconsin), David Johnson (University of California, Berkeley), and Anthony C. Yu (University of Chicago) traced the origins of Chinese fiction to the art of persuasion, as well as to narrative techniques amply on display across all early philosophical and historical writing,⁹⁷ so much so that no new account of early historiography, for example, in On-cho Ng (Pennsylvania State University) and Q. Edward Wang’s (Rowan University) 2005 book *Mirroring the Past: The Writing and Use of History in Imperial China*,⁹⁸ can ignore the commonalities between history and fiction in early China. As a result, however, an uneasy and unresolved tension now exists between what we know about the literary constructions of early historical works and the trust we still wish to put in texts such as *Zuo zhuan* and *Guoyu* simply because of a lack of other sources. Recent essays such as those by David Schaberg (University of California, Los Angeles) and Wai-ye Li (Harvard University) eloquently testify to this ongoing tension.⁹⁹

The one text that even those who read the *Zuo zhuan* as factual history accept as a collection of historically unreliable anecdotes is the *Zhangguo ce*. This is due largely to the work, over four decades, by James I. Crump Jr. (University of Michigan) who has shown the *Zhangguo ce* anecdotes to be examples of rhetorical persuasion. Following his critical studies, Crump published his revised translation of the entire text in 1996.¹⁰⁰ In 1989, Yumiko Fukushima Blanford wrote a massive dissertation on the *Zhangguo ce* fragments and related rhetorical texts in the Mawangdui silk manuscripts.¹⁰¹

The literary and rhetorical analysis of the *Zuo zhuan* began with two influential essays by Ronald C. Egan (University of California, Santa Barbara) and John C. Y. Wang (Stanford University), both published in 1977.¹⁰² In 1999 Eric Henry (University of North Carolina) analyzed the “Junzi yue 君子曰” and “Zhongni yue 仲尼曰” comments in the text.¹⁰³ However, the scholar who has done most for the analysis of the *Zuo zhuan* since the late 1990s is David Schaberg, who has published an outstanding book, *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography*,¹⁰⁴ and a series of essays on various aspects of the text.¹⁰⁵ To this, Wai-ye Li has now added another impressive book on the construction and readability of meaning in the *Zuo zhuan*, titled *The Readability of the Past in Early Chinese Historiography*.¹⁰⁶ Schaberg, Li, and Stephen W. Durrant (University of Oregon) have also, in a joint effort, completed a new translation of the *Zuo zhuan*.¹⁰⁷

Even more attention has been given to the *Shiji* than to the *Zuo zhuan*. Here studies are devoted to the authenticity and textual problems of individual chapters, to the interpretation of Sima Qian’s intentions, to the structure of the text, and, perhaps most importantly, to the reading of the *Shiji* as a reflection of Sima Qian’s fate and thought. The serious study of the *Shiji* in North America began with Burton Watson’s (Columbia University) 1957 *Ssu-ma Ch’ien: Grand Historian of China*.¹⁰⁸ At the

same time, Watson, drawing much on Japanese scholarship, prepared translations of some eighty-five chapters of the text, which were published in 1961 and 1969.¹⁰⁹ Since then numerous studies have appeared on the *Shiji*, with two scholars leading the field: William H. Nienhauser Jr. (University of Wisconsin) and Stephen W. Durrant (University of Oregon). Nienhauser, in addition to his many articles on the text, including reviews of its study in both China and the West,¹¹⁰ has assembled a team of translators to finally, for the first time, produce a complete translation of the *Shiji* in English. So far, six of nine projected volumes have been published.¹¹¹ Moreover, while other scholars have sometimes questioned the authenticity of certain *Shiji* chapters,¹¹² Nienhauser has been a strong defender of Sima Qian's authorship. While most of Nienhauser's detailed work is focused on the *Shiji*, Durrant has largely concentrated on the persona of Sima Qian, giving perceptive interpretations of Sima's worldview and motivations.¹¹³ The culmination of Durrant's efforts is his 1995 book *The Cloudy Mirror: Tension and Conflict in the Writings of Sima Qian*.¹¹⁴

Besides Watson, Nienhauser, and Durrant, a number of scholars have contributed further studies on Sima Qian,¹¹⁵ the narrative structure of the *Shiji*,¹¹⁶ and the historian's moral authority and judgment in the text.¹¹⁷ In addition, Grant Hardy (University of North Carolina at Asheville) has recently authored a book, *Worlds of Bronze and Bamboo*, contending that Sima Qian, driven by moral purposes, created the *Shiji* as a textual microcosm of multiple meanings.¹¹⁸

In contrast to the *Shiji*, the *Hanshu* has received far less attention. Following Homer H. Dubs's (Columbia University, etc.; later Oxford University) translation of the first twelve chapters plus the Wang Mang biography,¹¹⁹ Burton Watson (Columbia University) published a volume with further translations of selected chapters.¹²⁰ The only literary discussion of a chapter is Stephen Owen's (Harvard University) reading of the "Biography of Lady Li" (Li furen zhuan) as a critique of Emperor Wu's erotic passion.¹²¹ In addition, Martin Kern (Princeton University) has analyzed the rhetorical use of song in the *Hanshu* (and, to a lesser extent, the *Shiji*).¹²² Most recently, Anthony E. Clark (University of Alabama) published *Ban Gu's History of Early China*, offering his hypotheses about Ban Gu's political views and the motivation behind the *Hanshu*.¹²³

Other genres of Han dynasty prose have been largely neglected, save for two studies: a brief monograph on the literary structure of Wang Fu's *Qianfu lun*, by Anne Behnke Kinney (University of Virginia),¹²⁴ and a substantial dissertation on Han letters by Eva Yuen-wah Chung (formerly University of Washington).¹²⁵ Obviously, far more work needs to be done.

Finally, scholarship on early mythology has only gradually moved from anthropological to literary approaches. Important anthropological works on early myth are K. C. Chang's (Harvard University) classic study *Art, Myth, and Ritual: The Path to Political Authority in Ancient China*,¹²⁶ as well as Sarah Allan's (Dartmouth College) 1991 book *The Shape of the Turtle: Myth, Art, and Cosmos in Early China*.¹²⁷ Given the workings of euhemerism (and reverse euhemerism) in antiquity, many studies of early Chinese myths deal in one way or another with the legendary rulers at the dawn of civilization; excellent examples may be found in Allan's 1981 monograph *The Heir and the Sage: Dynastic Legend in Early China*,¹²⁸ and, most recently, Mark Edward Lewis's (Stanford University) 2002 book *The Flood Myths of Early China*.¹²⁹

Deborah Lynn Porter (University of Utah), in her essay on *Mu Tianzhi zhuan*,¹³⁰ and her 1996 book *From Deluge to Discourse: Myth, History, and the Genesis of Chinese Fiction*,¹³¹ has taken a somewhat more

literary (but especially psychoanalytical) approach to early mythology. In 2002, Richard E. Strassberg (University of California, Los Angeles) published his thorough study and partial translation of the *Shanbai jing*.¹³² Whalen Lai (University of California, Davis) has compiled a useful account of Chinese scholarship on myths,¹³³ and Paul R. Goldin (University of Pennsylvania) has written “The Myth That China Has No Creation Myth.”¹³⁴ Many more articles on individual myths have been published over the years,¹³⁵ although the boundaries of the study of early Chinese religion—another large field of research—are fluid. Remarkably, however, the myth-and-ritual (including myth-and-sacrifice) theory, which has been extremely influential in the study of ancient Greece, has never been adopted in any significant way by Western sinologists.

Conclusion

While there is no simple way to summarize the study of early Chinese literature in North America, several characteristics certainly stand out. To begin with, compared to the fields of late imperial and modern literature, and even to recent developments in the study of medieval literature, research on early Chinese literature may still be called conservative in the sense that most of it has remained closely focused on the reading and analysis of specific texts (as opposed to work in which texts are selectively used to illustrate the modern scholar’s own ideas). Next, in retrospect it appears that some of the comparatist and structuralist impulses of the 1960s through the 1980s reflected the desire to discuss Chinese literature in the terms of Western models and intellectual paradigms: texts were sometimes analyzed according to preconceived patterns, arguments were exchanged about the adequacy or inadequacy of using the language of traditional European literary thought to capture the nature of Chinese literature, and the songs of the *Shijing* were compared to the literature of the ancient Mediterranean world. The appeal of these approaches has faded, and not all of their results have aged well.

By contrast, the sinological study of Chinese literature, marked by a close focus on philological and historical analysis, has remained the most powerful approach in the field. Even when scholars are well trained in ancient Greek (or any other European) literature and have from there developed fine sensitivities to matters of literary form and rhetoric, they usually do not move their comparative interests into the foreground. Likewise, the field of early Chinese literature has remained largely immune to the latest trends in Western literary theory. Perhaps because of the sheer linguistic challenge or its archaic nature, this literature has not lent itself to the kind of intellectual acrobatics that are, more often than not, performed according to an entirely Western choreography. Even the limited number of studies driven by ambitious theoretical approaches are usually grounded in original texts. The postmodern (and other) jargon that over the past decades has marred so much of Western literary scholarship (and is now rapidly retreating) has never gained much ground in the study of early Chinese literature.

At the same time, the field has moved decidedly beyond the sometimes naïve and anachronistic ideas inherited from traditional beliefs and certain uncritical scholarship of the past. Simple assumptions about the purported folk origins of the *guofeng*, about early Western Zhou dates for any part of the *Shijing*, or about Qu Yuan’s authorship of much of the *Chuici* are no longer tenable, nor are the unquestioned acceptance of the *Zuo zhuan* as a factual account of Chunqiu period history, the pious idea that the

songs recorded in early historiography were indeed composed by heroes at the very moment of their demise, or the belief that the early anonymous *yuefu* can be faithfully dated to Han times.

One characteristic of the field of early Chinese literature is the fact that it is not situated in any particular academic institution. Outstanding work is being produced at numerous universities from small liberal arts colleges to large state universities. Some of the major programs in later Chinese literature, including some of the most prestigious institutions in North America, have no early Chinese literature program at all; at other places, research on Chinese literature is almost completely in the early period. A second characteristic of the field is that much of its research is centered on specific texts; moreover, some individual scholars have spent years and sometimes decades working primarily on a particular genre or even a single text. Thus, senior scholars like David R. Knechtges (University of Washington) or William H. Nienhauser Jr. (University of Wisconsin) have largely defined the study of the Han *fu* and the *Shiji*, respectively; one simply cannot imagine the field without their massive contributions. Likewise, a small number of midcareer scholars such as David Schaberg (University of California, Los Angeles) or Martin Kern (Princeton University) have similarly written entire series of studies on specific texts, in this case, the *Zuo zhuan* and the *Shijing*, respectively. While all these scholars have also worked on many other questions and hence cannot be regarded as limited by narrow specialization, it is easy to see that the study of these texts would look much different without their sustained efforts over many years. In this way, the field, also because of its relative smallness, is highly personalized and—especially considering that North American scholars occasionally move from one university to another—not primarily bound to particular institutional traditions. (In reverse, one can also see what happens when a text does not attract anyone's sustained attention, like, e.g., the *Chuci*; no coherent body of scholarship, or even set of questions, has emerged for it.)

Meanwhile, in addition to painstaking research on individual texts, scholars occasionally engage in rigorous discussions over fundamental questions. Recently, a controversy has emerged over the very nature of early Chinese textuality, specifically regarding the presence of and interplay between writing and orality in texts from Zhou through Han times. (This discussion is not to be confused with the 1970s interest in oral folk composition of poetry!) To some extent, this debate follows the one in the study of Western antiquity, where it has been alive for several decades already. The case of early China, however, has become complicated—in a very fruitful and productive way—by recent manuscript finds. Shall we think of Zhou and even Han China as a culture where writing and reading were the highest and also most natural forms of cultural expression and learning?¹³⁶ Or shall we emphasize the notion of performance culture in which literary texts were internalized in memorization and externalized in performance even when the technology of writing was readily at hand?¹³⁷ These questions go to the compositional process and very nature of early texts and to the core of our historical imagination of ancient Chinese culture. The study of literature is the field where they can be pursued most effectively.

Notes

Martin Kern, received his PhD in sinology in 1996 from Cologne University. After teaching at the University of Washington (1997–98) and Columbia University (1998–2000), he moved to Princeton University (2000) where he is now Professor of Chinese Literature in the Department of East Asian Studies. A specialist in ancient Chinese literature (Zhou through Han), his interdisciplinary work cuts across the fields of literature, literary theory, philology, history, religion, and art in ancient and medieval China, with a primary focus on poetry. He has written or edited five books, including *The Stele Inscriptions of Ch'in Shib-huang: Text and Ritual in Early Chinese Imperial Representation* (2000) and the edited volumes *Text and Ritual in Early China* (2005) and *Statecraft and Classical Learning: The Rituals of Zhou in East Asian History* (2009, with Benjamin A. Elman). In addition, he has written more than fifty articles and book chapters, including chapter 1 in *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature* (2010). A collection of his essays translated into Chinese is titled *Zaoqi Zhongguo de shuxie, shige he wenhua jiyi* 早期中國的書寫、詩歌和文化記憶 and is forthcoming from Sanlian Publishers, Beijing. For further information, see his website, <http://www.princeton.edu/~mkern/>.

This review article was written in July 2009.

¹ <http://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/earlychina/>. Another highly valuable website for Western scholarship in all fields of early China studies is maintained by Paul R. Goldin at the University of Pennsylvania: <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/ealc/paul-r-goldin>. In preparing the present essay, I have greatly benefited from Professor Goldin's massive and detailed bibliography.

² Burton Watson, *Early Chinese Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962).

³ *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Stephen Owen and Kang-I Sun Chang (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁴ Kern has published a similar chapter in German: "Die Anfänge der chinesischen Literatur" [The beginnings of Chinese literature], in *Chinesische Literaturgeschichte* [History of Chinese literature], ed. Reinhard Emmerich (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2004), 1–87. Both Knechtges and Kern are preparing to expand their Cambridge chapters into book-length monographs, to be published by Brill in Leiden.

⁵ David R Knechtges and Taiping Chang. *Ancient and Early Medieval Chinese Literature: a Reference Guide* (Leiden: Brill, 2010-)

⁶ James Legge, *The She King or the Book of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1871). Numerous reprints followed.

⁷ The school was renamed the School of Oriental and African Studies in 1938.

⁸ Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1937; repr., New York: Grove Press, 1960). Waley had originally rearranged the sequence of the *Shijing* songs into seventeen categories of contents. The original sequence of the *Mao shi* was restored by Joseph R. Allen (University of Minnesota), who republished Waley's translation in 1996 (New York: Grove Press), adding the small number of songs that Waley had left untranslated.

⁹ Karlgren, Bernhard. 1964. Index to glosses on the book of odes [*Shih ching*]; Glosses on the book of documents. Stockholm: [s.n.]. The translation was reprinted in one volume in 1950 (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities); the glosses were reprinted in one volume in 1964 (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities).

¹⁰ Ezra Pound, *The Classic Anthology Defined by Confucius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

¹¹ Remarkably, Marcel Granet's *Fêtes et chansons anciennes de la Chine* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1919), though translated by into English E. D. Edwards in 1932 as *Festivals and Songs of Ancient China* (London: Routledge; New York: Dutton), was never able to exert the kind of influence in North America that it has enjoyed to this day in Europe and even in parts of East Asia. Its emphasis on the folk origin of the *guofeng* influenced Arthur Waley's translation and is still shared by other scholars (including C. H. Wang) but has failed to become universally accepted.

¹² James Robert Hightower, Han Shih Wai Chuan: Han Ying's Illustrations of the Didactic Application of the Classic of Songs (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952); James Robert Hightower, "The Han shih wai chuan and the San chia shih," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 11 (1948): 241–310.

¹³ These are George A. Kennedy, "Metrical 'Irregularity' in the *Shih Ching*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 4 (1939): 284–96, reprinted in *Selected Works of George A. Kennedy*, ed. Li Tien-yi (New Haven: Far Eastern Publications, Yale University, 1964), 10–26; and "A Note on Ode 220," in *Studia Serica Bernhard Karlgren Dedicata: Sinological Studies Dedicated to Bernhard Karlgren on his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Søren Egerod and Else Glahn (Copenhagen: E. Munksgaard, 1959), 190–98.

¹⁴ W. A. C. H. Dobson, *The Language of the Book of Songs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968). Dobson also published "The Origin and Development of Prosody in Early Chinese Poetry," *T'oung Pao* 54 (1968): 231–50.

¹⁵ William McNaughton, *The Book of Songs* (New York: Twayne, 1971); "The Composite Image: Shy Jing Poetics," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 83 (1963): 92–106; "Shi ching Rhetoric: Schemes of Words," PhD diss., Yale University, 1965.

¹⁶ Chen Shih-hsiang, "The Shih Ching: Its Generic Significance in Chinese Literary History and Poetics," *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology* 39 (1969): 371–413; reprinted in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. Cyril Birch (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 8–41.

¹⁷ C. H. Wang, *The Bell and the Drum: Shih Ching as Formulaic Poetry in an Oral Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974). For the Lord-Parry theory on the composition of the Homeric epics, see Albert Bates Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).

¹⁸ Hans H. Frankel, "The Formulaic Language of the Chinese Ballad 'Southeast Fly the Peacocks,'" *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academic Sinica* 39 (1969): 219–44; "The Chinese Ballad 'Southeast Fly the Peacocks,'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 34 (1974): 248–71.

¹⁹ Charles H. Egan, "Were *Yüeh-fu* Ever Folk Songs? Reconsidering the Relevance of Oral Theory and Balladry Analogies," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 22 (2000): 31–66; "Reconsidering the Role of Folk Songs in Pre-T'ang *Yüeh-fu* Development," *T'oung Pao* 86 (2000): 47–99.

²⁰ C. H. Wang, *From Ritual to Allegory: Seven Essays in Early Chinese Poetry* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1988).

- ²¹ Pauline Yu, "Allegory, Allegoresis, and the Classic of Poetry," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43 (1983): 377–412, in a later version published anew in Yu's *The Reading of Imagery in the Chinese Poetic Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).
- ²² Haun Saussy, *The Problem of a Chinese Aesthetic* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).
- ²³ Ming Dong Gu, *Chinese Theories of Reading and Writing: A Route to Hermeneutics and Open Poetics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).
- ²⁴ Ming Dong Gu, "Fu-Bi-Xing: A Metatheory of Poetry-Making," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 19 (1997): 1–22.
- ²⁵ Wei-qun Dai, "Xing Again: A Formal Re-Investigation," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 13 (1991): 1–14.
- ²⁶ Wei-qun Dai, "Orienting Mimesis: Marriage and the *Book of Songs*," *Representations* 94 (2006): 53–79.
- ²⁷ J. Y. Liu, *Chinese Theories of Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).
- ²⁸ Chow Tse-tsung, "The Early History of the Chinese Word *Shih* (Poetry)," in *Wen-lin: Studies in the Chinese Humanities*, ed. Chow Tse-tsung (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), 151–209; "Ancient Chinese Views of Literature, the Tao, and Their Relationship," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 1 (1979): 3–29.
- ²⁹ Donald Holzman, "Confucius and Ancient Chinese Literary Criticism," in *Chinese Approaches to Literature: From Confucius to Liang Ch'i-ch'ao*, ed. Adele Austin Rickett (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 21–41.
- ³⁰ Kenneth J. DeWoskin, *A Song for One or Two: Music and the Concept of Art in Early China* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1982); Kenneth J. DeWoskin, "Early Chinese Music and the Origins of Aesthetic Terminology," in *Theories of the Arts in China*, ed. Susan Bush and Christian Murck (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 187–214; Scott Cook (Grinnell College), "Yue Ji—Record of Music: Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Commentary," *Asian Music* 26.2 (1995): 1–96; Scott Cook, "Xun Zi on Ritual and Music," *Monumenta Serica* 45 (1997): 1–38; Erica F. Brindley (Pennsylvania State University), "Music and 'Seeking One's Heart-Mind' in the 'Xing Zi Ming Chu,'" *Dao* 5 (2006): 247–55; Erica F. Brindley, "Music, Cosmos, and the Development of Psychology in Early China," *T'oung Pao* 92 (2006): 1–49; Erica F. Brindley, "The Cosmic Power of Sound in the Late Warring States and Han Periods," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 35 (2007): 1–35; Haun Saussy, "'Ritual Separates, Music Unites': Why Musical Hermeneutics Matters," in *Recarving the Dragon: Understanding Chinese Poetics*, ed. Olga Lomová (Prague: Charles University, Karolinum Press, 2003), 9–25. See also Saussy, *The Problem of a Chinese Aesthetic*. In addition, Scott Cook has published a study on early aesthetic theory in the excavated "Wu xing" 五行 essays from Mawangdui and Guodian; see his "Consummate Artistry and Moral Virtuosity: The 'Wu xing' 五行 Essay and Its Aesthetic Implications," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Reviews, Articles* 22 (2000): 113–46. Paula M. Varsano (University of California, Berkeley) has written two more broadly framed studies on the theme of space and subjectivity in early poetry; see her "Getting There from Here: Locating the Subject in Early Chinese Poetics," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 56 (1996): 375–403; and "Une vue de mille Li: L'espace réflexif et l'évolution de la subjectivité lyrique en Chine," *Cahiers du Centre Marcel Granet* 2 (2004): 91–111.
- ³¹ Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 19–36.

- ³² Joseph R. Allen, "The End and the Beginning of Narrative Poetry in China," *Asia Major*, 3rd ser., 2 (1989): 1–24.
- ³³ Steven Van Zoeren, *Poetry and Personality: Reading, Exegesis, and Hermeneutics in Traditional China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
- ³⁴ William H. Baxter III, *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1992). See also Baxter's important study "Zhou and Han Phonology in the *Shijing*," in *Studies in the Historical Phonology of Asian Languages*, ed. William G. Boltz and Michael C. Shapiro (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1991), 1–34.
- ³⁵ Stephen Owen, *Readings in Chinese Literary Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 37–56; John Timothy Wixted, "The *Kokinshū* Prefaces: Another Perspective," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 43 (1983): 215–38.
- ³⁶ Mark Laurent Asselin, "The Lu-School Reading of 'Guanju' As Preserved in an Eastern Han *Fu*," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 117 (1997): 427–43.
- ³⁷ Haun Saussy, "Repetition, Rhyme, and Exchange in the *Book of Odes*," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57 (1997): 519–42; Stephen Owen, "Reproduction in the *Shijing* (Classic of Poetry)," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 61 (2001): 287–315; Dore J. Levy, "Constructing Sequences: Another Look at the Principle of *Fu* 'Enumeration,'" *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46 (1986): 471–93.
- ³⁸ David R. Knechtges, "Questions about the Language of *Sheng min*," in *Ways with Words: Writing about Reading Texts from Early China*, ed. Pauline Yu et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 14–24.
- ³⁹ Joseph R. Allen, "Postface: A Literary History of the *Shijing*," in Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove, 1996), 336–83.
- ⁴⁰ Michael Nylan, *The Five "Confucian" Classics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 72–120.
- ⁴¹ Peter Flueckiger, "The *Shijing* in Tokugawa Ancient Learning," *Monumenta Serica* 55 (2007): 195–225.
- ⁴² This would also include the monograph by Gilbert L. Mattos, *The Stone Drums of Ch'in* (Nettetal: Steyler, 1988). The "stone drums" include fragments of Warring States poetry similar to that of the *Shijing*; Mattos's study, however, is more historical than literary.
- ⁴³ Edward L. Shaughnessy, "From Ritual to Literature: The Ritual Contexts of the Earliest Poems in the *Book of Poetry*," 漢學研究 13 (1995): 133–64, reprinted in Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Before Confucius: Studies in the Creation of the Chinese Classics* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).
- ⁴⁴ Jeffrey K. Riegel, "Eros, Introversion, and the Beginnings in *Shijing* Commentary," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57.1 (1997): 143–77. A decade earlier, Riegel published an article, "Poetry and the Legend of Confucius's Exile," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106 (1986): 13–22, in which he studied three songs from the 衛風 section and their possible relation to the story of Confucius's travels.
- ⁴⁵ Mark Edward Lewis, *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 147–94.
- ⁴⁶ Zhou Yiqun, "Virtue and Talent: Women and *fushi* in Early China," *Nannü* 5 (2003): 1–42.

- ⁴⁷ Paul R. Goldin, "Imagery of Copulation in Early Chinese Poetry," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 21 (1999): 35–66. A revised and expanded version of this essay was published as chapter 1 of Goldin's *The Culture of Sex in Ancient China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 8–47.
- ⁴⁸ Paul R. Goldin, "The Reception of the Odes in the Warring States Era," in *After Confucius: Studies in Early Chinese Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 19–35.
- ⁴⁹ Martin Kern, "Bronze Inscriptions, the *Shangshu*, and the *Shijing*: The Evolution of the Ancestral Sacrifice during the Western Zhou," in *Early Chinese Religion*, pt. 1: *Shang through Han (1250 BC to 220 AD)*, ed. John Lagerwey and Marc Kalinowski (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 143–200; "Quotation and the Confucian Canon in Early Chinese Manuscripts: The Case of 'Zi Yi' (Black Robes)," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 59.1 (2005): 293–332; "引據與中國古代寫本文獻中的儒家經典：《緇衣》研究," 簡帛研究 2005: 7–29; "從出土文獻談《國風》的詮釋問題：以《關雎》為例," 中華文史論叢 2008.1: 253–271; "Beyond the *Mao Odes*: *Shijing* Reception in Early Medieval China," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 127 (2007): 131–42; "Excavated Manuscripts and Their Socratic Pleasures: Newly Discovered Challenges in Reading the 'Airs of the States,'" *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 61 (2007): 775–93; "作為記憶的詩：《詩》及其早期詮釋," 國學研究 16 (2005): 329–41; "The *Odes* in Excavated Manuscripts," in *Text and Ritual in Early China*, ed. Martin Kern (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 149–93; "出土文獻與文化記憶：詩經早期歷史研究," 中國哲學 25 (2004): 111–58; "Early Chinese Poetics in the Light of Recently Excavated Manuscripts," in *Recarving the Dragon: Understanding Chinese Poetics*, ed. Olga Lomová (Prague: Charles University, Karolinum Press, 2003), 27–72; "Methodological Reflections on the Analysis of Textual Variants and the Modes of Manuscript Production in Early China," *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 4 (2002): 143–81; "*Shi jing* Songs as Performance Texts: A Case Study of 'Chu ci' ('Thorny Caltrop')," *Early China* 25 (2000): 49–111.
- ⁵⁰ Arthur Waley, *The Temple and Other Poems* (London: Allen and Unwin; New York: Knopf).
- ⁵¹ James Robert Hightower, "Ch'ü Yüan Studies," in *Silver Jubilee Volume of the Zinbun-Kagaku-Kenkyusyo* (Kyoto: Kyoto University, 1954), 192–223.
- ⁵² Arthur Waley, *The Nine Songs: A Study of Shamanism in Ancient China* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1955). The theme of shamanism was further pursued by Chan Ping-leung in "*Ch'u Tz'u* Shamanism in Ancient China" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1972).
- ⁵³ David Hawkes, *Ch'u Tz'u: The Songs of the South* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959).
- ⁵⁴ Angus C. Graham, "The Prosody of the *Sao* Poems in the *Ch'u Tz'u*," *Asia Major*, n.s., 10 (1963): 119–51. In 1982 Galal LeRoy Walker completed his dissertation on rhymes and other formal features in the *Chuci* under the title "Toward a Formal History of the *Chuci*" (PhD diss., Cornell University).
- ⁵⁵ David Hawkes, "The Quest of the Goddess," *Asia Major*, n.s., 13 (1967): 71–94; reprinted in *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres*, ed. Cyril Birch (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 42–68. Another essay on the "Nine Songs" is Chen Shih-hsiang's "On Structural Analysis of the *Ch'u Tz'u* Nine Songs," *Tamkang Review* 2 (1971): 3–14.
- ⁵⁶ Chen Shih-hsiang, "On Structural Analysis of the *Ch'u Tz'u* Nine Songs," *Tamkang Review* 2 (1971): 3–14; "The Genesis of Poetic Time: The Greatness of Ch'ü Yuan," *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, n.s., 10 (June 1973): 1–44.

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¹³² Richard E. Strassberg, *A Chinese Bestiary: Strange Creatures from the Guideways through Mountains and Seas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

¹³³ Whalen Lai, “Recent PRC Scholarship on Chinese Myths,” *Asian Folklore Studies* 53 (1994): 151–63.

¹³⁴ Paul R. Goldin, “The Myth That China Has No Creation Myth,” *Monumenta Serica* 56 (2008): 1–22.

¹³⁵ Sarah Allan, “The Identities of Taigong Wang in Zhou and Han Literature,” *Monumenta Serica* 30 (1972–73): 57–99; Sarah Allan, “Shang Foundations of Modern Chinese Folk Religion,” in *Legend, Lore, and Religions in China: Essays in Honor of Wolfram Eberhard on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Sarah Allan and Alvin P. Cohen (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1979), 1–21; Sarah Allan, “Sons of Suns: Myth and Totemism in Early China,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 44 (1981): 290–326; William G. Boltz, “Kung Kung and the Flood: Reverse Euhemerism in the *Yao tien*,” *T’oung Pao* 67 (1981): 141–53; Jeffrey K. Riegel (University of California, Berkeley, now University of Sydney), “Kou-mang and Ju-shou,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 5 (1989–90): 55–83; Stephen F. Teiser, “Engulfing the Bounds of Order: The Myth of the Great Flood in *Mencius*,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 13–14 (1985–86): 15–43; Whalen Lai, “Symbolism of Evil in China: The K’ung-chia Myth Analyzed,” *History of Religions* 23 (1984): 316–43; Whalen Lai, “Looking for Mr. Ho Po: Unmasking the River God of Ancient China,” *History of Religions* 29 (1990): 335–50; Charles Le Blanc (University of Montreal), “A Re-examination of the Myth of Huang-ti,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 13–14 (1985–86): 45–63. Michael Puett’s (Harvard University) studies, which are more anthropological than literary, are listed in Paul R. Goldin’s essay in the present volume.

¹³⁶ This appears to be the core assumption of historians such as Edward L. Shaughnessy (University of Chicago) and Mark Edward Lewis (Stanford University). See Shaughnessy’s *Rewriting Early Chinese Texts* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006); and Lewis’s *Writing and Authority in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

¹³⁷ As has been argued by Michael Nylan, David Schaberg, and Martin Kern, see Nylan’s “Textual Authority in Pre-Han and Han,” *Early China* 25 (2000): 205–58; Schaberg’s *A Patterned Past: Form and Thought in Early Chinese Historiography* (Cambridge, MA: Asia Center, Harvard University, 2001); and Kern’s “Feature: *Writing and Authority in Early China*, by Mark Edward Lewis,” *China Review International* 7 (2000): 336–76, and “Ritual, Text, and the Formation of the Canon: Historical Transitions of *Wen* in Early China,” *T’oung Pao* 87 (2001): 43–91, as well as Kern’s studies on the *Shijing* and the Han *fu* noted above.

Song, Jin, and Yuan Dynasties Literature

Ronald Egan

Although the number of scholars in North America working on Song, Jin, and Yuan dynasties literature is not as large as the number working on Ming-Qing period literature, the earlier period does have a critical mass of specialists, and their research has achieved important findings. Most book-length studies are devoted to either Song dynasty *shi* 诗 poetry or *ci* 词 (the latter now conventionally called “song lyric” in English-language scholarship). There are some exceptions to this divide between the two major genres, that is, some studies give joint or concurrent attention to *shi* and *ci*, and perhaps even to prose. But the tendency to study the genres independent of each other is still dominant. There are also substantial studies of Song-Yuan period drama and other colloquial literature, as well as numerous translations of the same.

The earliest major work on Song poetry published in North America was not by a resident scholar but by the Japanese sinologist Yoshikawa Kōjirō. The English version of Yoshikawa’s work, *An Introduction to Sung Poetry*, appeared in 1967, translated by Burton Watson (Harvard University Press). This work has had a great impact and influence on Song poetry studies in North America. One of the primary aims of Yoshikawa’s study was to point out the ways that Song poetry departed from Tang conventions of style, subject, and tone. This aim went hand in hand with Yoshikawa’s intent to promote the study of Song poetry and to prevent it from being disparaged as failing to live up to Tang period literary ideals. Although Yoshikawa’s insistence on the stylistic disparity between Tang and Song poetry was in a sense nothing new (Chinese scholars had for centuries debated the relative merits of the “two” styles), his attention to the new direction Song poetry took energized North American scholars to take a fresh look at Song poetry on its own terms. The impulse to identify Song poetry as a departure from Tang models guided early treatments of the subject, which is not to say that all scholars agreed on the nature of that departure. A lively exchange concerning Song poets’ sense of competition with their Tang counterparts, versus their indebtedness to the same, appeared in a 1982 volume *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles and Reviews*. Stuart Sargent’s essay emphasized the competitive nature of the relationship (“Can Latecomers Get There First? Song Poets and Tang Poetry”), while Jonathan Chaves’s responding essay emphasized the Song indebtedness to the Tang even as they created a new poetics through careful scrutiny of their own world.¹ Chaves’s own earlier study of Mei Yaochen, *Mei Yao-ch’en and the Development of Early Song Poetry* (Columbia University Press, 1976), analyzes that poet’s valuation of the aesthetics of *pingdan* 平淡 (already discussed by Yoshikawa) as the key to his distinctive style. It was, according to Chaves, Mei’s cultivation of a *pingdan* mode in diction and feeling that enabled him to be such an accurate and intent observer of the social and natural world, setting the tone for much that followed in later Song verse.

Subsequently, the study of Song dynasty poetry in North America developed in many directions. The plurality of approaches makes generalization difficult, but there is a tendency that sets North American scholarship apart from Chinese scholarship on the subject: North American scholars are less likely to treat a Song poet simply in the linear chronology of Song poetic history, that is, to trace changes in poetic style from one generation or school of poets to the next. Instead, North American studies are more apt to situate whatever poet or period of poetic history they focus on in a larger context, exploring its relationship to fields outside of literary history, whether the particular linkage they are interested in be intellectual or social history, religion, cultural history, or the visual arts. Surely this tendency owes something to the emphasis on “interdisciplinarity” that has been so fashionable in North American academia over the past twenty-five years, especially in the humanities. But I suspect that it also owes something to the position of “outsiders” that North American scholars naturally occupy when attending to Chinese studies. As cultural outsiders “looking in” at Chinese poetry (or any other form of cultural expression, for that matter), it is quite natural to want to situate that field in the larger arena of Chinese culture, the better to contextualize it in its own cultural setting. If it is more natural for the native Chinese scholar to be content to treat poetry solely within the scope of literary history, secure as he is in his knowledge of the place of that field in Chinese cultural history, it is probably more natural for the foreign scholar to want to view his poetic subject in the light of the larger cultural context that is, after all, different from his own.

Even those studies that focus quite exclusively on poetry typically treat it in a different way from what is normally found in Chinese-language scholarship, and likewise raise issues that are distinct. Consider, for example, Michael Fuller’s *The Road to East Slope: The Development of Su Shi’s Poetic Voice* (Stanford University Press, 1990). This is a study of the early poetry of Su Shi. The study ends with Su Shi’s exile period in Huangzhou 黄州, which occurred barely halfway through his adult life. This is already an unusual way to go about studying Su Shi, to terminate the work midway through his life and productivity as a poet. Fuller does this because he is interested in tracing the way the literary persona of “East Slope” 东坡 developed out of the work Su Shi had produced as a young man. The “road to East Slope” thus refers to the process through which Su Shi as a poet came to be “Su Dongpo.” “Poetic voice” in the book’s title is a key to the author’s special interest. Fuller assumes a disjunction between the historical poet and the “voice” or persona he cultivates when he composes poetry. Whereas Chinese studies of Su Shi typically say that he reached maturity as a poet during his Huangzhou years, Fuller focuses on the persona of Su Dongpo and the way it is cultivated and manipulated to achieve certain effects. A very different impression of Su Shi’s poetry from that conventionally found in Chinese writings thus emerges.

Another determinedly literary study of Song poetry is Stuart Sargent’s *The Poetry of He Zhu (1052–1125): Genres, Contexts, and Creativity* (Leiden: Brill, 2007). This is an extraordinarily meticulous study of one poet’s surviving works in the *shi* form, nearly five hundred pages of detailed, sometimes line-by-line readings and discussions of the diction and prosody of each of hundreds of poems treated. What sets this study apart, aside from the painstaking and learned analysis of poetic language, is Sargent’s decision to treat each poetic form separately in distinct chapters: ancient-style verse 古体诗, songs 歌行, pentametrical regulated verse 五言律诗, heptametrical regulated verse 近体诗 长句, pentametrical quatrains 五言绝句, and heptametrical quatrains 七言绝句. Each chapter is

chronologically arranged, so that we are taken, six times in six chapters, year by year, through He Zhu's 贺铸 output in the form under consideration. Sargent's purpose in structuring his study this way is twofold. The first is to call attention to the importance of chronology in understanding a poet's work. A given poet's work is not, he would contend, made from a single stamp. Rather it changes through time as his life circumstances and literary choices evolve. Second, he intends to call attention to distinctions of form (genre) in reading Chinese verse. A particular poet does not have, as conventional literary history tends to suggest, a single poetic style but rather multiple styles in the multiple forms. Attention to these stylistic variations across form, he argues, is needed if we are to produce more nuanced and less reductive literary histories.

There are a few monographs in English that look at one writer's output across different genres (unlike Fuller's or Sargent's, which look only at a single poetic genre) or adopt the "life and writings" approach. J. D. Schmidt produced separate studies of the life and works of the Southern Song poets Yang Wanli and Fan Chengda.² Ronald Egan did the same for Su Shi, after earlier undertaking a study that looks at Ouyang Xiu's writings in the different genres of *shi*, *ci*, *fu* 赋, and prose.³

We turn now to studies that connect the poetic subject at hand with other fields or interests in Chinese cultural generally. There is considerable interest among North American scholars in the roles Buddhism played in premodern China, and this is reflected in at least two volumes concerned with Song poetry or *wenren* (literati) culture. Beata Grant devoted an entire book to studying Buddhism in the life and works of Su Shi: *Mount Lu Revisited: Buddhism in the Life and Writings of Su Shih* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1994). The study takes the reader chronologically through Su Shi's life, tracing his involvement in each period with Buddhist monks, visits to monasteries, and writings on Buddhist sutras and doctrines. Owing to her special focus, Grant discusses dozens of poems, hymns, prayers, letters, and essays by Su Shi that are normally not treated in standard treatments of his life and writings, whether in Chinese or in English. Grant's presentation demonstrates beyond any doubt the importance of Buddhism in Su Shi's life and thought. It also provides insight into the tensions in a life like Su Shi's between the Buddhist quest for salvation and the Confucian sense of duty to the state. A different approach to the connection between Buddhism and literati culture is found in Mark Halperin's *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960–1279* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2006). Basing his research primarily on hundreds of temple inscriptions (*miaoji* 庙记, *siji* 寺记) written by literati at the invitation of monks, Halperin explores literati involvement with Buddhist institutions. He shows that literati, as lay Buddhists or, at least, interested observers of Buddhism, entered into dialogue with the Buddhists of their day. In their temple inscriptions, literati joined debates going on within Buddhist circles, holding forth, for example, on the virtues or shortcomings of Chan vis-à-vis other rival Buddhist schools. One of Halperin's chapters examines imperial gifts bestowed on temples, and the approving comments these elicit from literati who write about them. Certain Buddhist temples and monasteries were selected by emperors to serve as memorials for war dead, sites where imperial birthdays were celebrated, repositories of imperial calligraphy, or galleries of imperial portraits. Halperin's discussion documents the thoroughgoing partnership that was thus formed between the Buddhist church and the imperial institution. In another chapter, Halperin considers literati comments on temples' impact on society. Here, too, a remarkable range of opinions are brought to light. Temples are sometimes excoriated by literati as parasitic blights on their locale,

but more often they are celebrated for the benefits they bring to the commoners, or for the models their monks provide of industrious conduct and virtuous self-denial.

In a series of articles and a forthcoming book, Michael Fuller has been working on the relationship between poetry, especially that of the Southern Song, and intellectual history.⁴ He sees Song literary history as inseparable from the Confucian revival of the period known as the Learning of the Way 道学 movement. Fuller's special interest is in exploring the role of poetry in the transformation of Chinese society and culture from the late Northern Song through the end of the Southern Song. He traces the evolution of debates that wove together moral values, canonical texts, selfhood, poetry, and political action. Confronting the disappearance of the aristocratic class that had staffed the bureaucracy during the previous dynasties, the Song emperors created an elite stratum of officials selected through competitive examinations. This elite in turn looked to its mastery of the textual traditions to support its moral, civic, and governmental authority in the newly evolving Song social order. As the dynasty grew and produced successive generations of scholar-officials, however, policy disputes showed that the canonical texts did not speak with one voice. Partisans of different positions adduced different texts to support their arguments, proving to many that new approaches to reading were needed to ground their understanding of the Confucian sages. This rethinking of the social and textual sources of moral authority produced the Learning of the Way movement, which came to reshape late imperial Chinese culture. These same forces also led writers to rethink the nature of poetry. Since both poetry and the Learning of the Way explored the relationship between inner experience and texts, the two processes were integral parts of the debates of the Southern Song dynasty. The writing of poetry provided an important forum for exploring the problems in this rethinking of the meaning of experience. This study will have separate chapters on Huang Tingjian, the Jiangxi School of poetry, Lu You and Yang Wanli, Zhu Xi and the Learning of the Way movement, the "Rivers and Lakes" poets of the later Southern Song, Liu Kezhuang, and Wen Tianxiang. The study traces changes in poetic style and thinking about poetry for what they reveal about the cultural logic of the deep shifts of the late Song dynasty and as a model for rethinking literary history as a discipline.

A very different approach is found in Colin S. C. Hawes's study *The Social Circulation of Poetry in the Mid-Northern Song: Emotional Energy and Literati Self-Cultivation* (State University of New York Press, 2005). In Hawes's view, the connection between writing (*wen* 文) and the Way (*dao* 道) has received too much attention in scholarship on Song poetry (in English and Chinese). What has been lost sight of, consequently, is the social function poetry served at the time. Hawes seeks to rectify this critical myopia by reconstructing the social context of poetry writing, concentrating on the verse of Ouyang Xiu and Mei Yaochen. In doing this, he stresses the lightheartedness, joking, mutual teasing, humorous self-deprecation, and occasional nature of so much of their work, pointing out, for example, that of the 2,900 poems by Mei over 2,400 are directly addressed to someone else (usually a friend). Hawes devotes a whole chapter to poetry as a game between competing friends and another to poetry and relationship building. But even Hawes goes on to discuss functions of poetry writing and the exchange of poems that go beyond what is playful and socially amicable. He considers the notion that poetry writing can be "therapeutic" in the sense that it may serve to dispel sadness, release harmful emotion, and promote emotional equilibrium, enhancing the bodily circulation of *qi* 气. He then analyzes poems on antiquarian objects as serving this purpose. In a final chapter, Hawes examines poems on

exceptional natural objects (e.g., unusual flowers, birds, olives, or exquisite tea) and argues that in this verse Ouyang and Mei effected a “humanization of nature,” which allowed them to transcend the corruption of the political world that was all around them.

Finally, we come to studies of poetry and other literary writings that seek to situate such works in the larger narrative of cultural history, viewed in one or another of its manifestations. Here we also see the interdisciplinary impulse very much in evidence, but the other discipline is not a single, readily recognizable field such as intellectual history. It is rather the general flow and change of cultural history from the Tang through the Song and beyond.

Xiaoshan Yang’s *Metamorphosis of the Private Sphere: Gardens and Objects in Tang-Song Poetry* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2003) is such a work, examining as it does broad cultural shifts in conceptions of the self from the mid-Tang through the end of the Northern Song. Yang focuses on the private urban garden and aesthetic objects put into it (e.g., birds or rocks) as they are written about in Tang and Song poetry. But this is not a study of Chinese gardens. It is rather a study of how gardens and aesthetic objects collected by literati became a strategy whereby an individual constructed a private space for himself that was very much a haven and alternative to public spaces that were no longer emotionally or psychologically fulfilling. Yang’s thesis is that, starting with Bai Juyi in the Tang, poets constructed and cultivated this private sphere in ways not done in earlier Chinese literature. But the process was by no means a simple one or one free of apprehensions. Quite the contrary, precisely because poets were creating something new *and* something that was an alternative to conventional ways of constructing the self as a member of a larger social whole, whether the family, locale, or state, the making of this private sphere was highly problematic and constantly challenged by misgivings, second-guessing, and change. Thus, in the fascination with collecting strange-shaped rocks (petrophilia), for example, Yang shows how an incidental curiosity turned into an aesthetic fetishism carried to extraordinary lengths, so that there was practically no limit to the expense and effort rock lovers would go to satisfy their infatuation with these objects. It was easy enough, in the late Tang and Northern Song, to condemn the excesses of the most extravagant rock collectors. But many of the critics themselves retained an attachment to rocks of smaller dimensions that was likewise seen as a threat to the ideal of detachment from “things.” Yang examines these and other contradictions that surfaced as poets struggled to construct their alternative private spheres and justify them. A chapter on exchanging aesthetic objects from one owner to another brings up the problem of possessiveness and also the sensitive one of the market value of such things as paintings and other collectibles, a topic rarely broached openly by literati themselves. His concluding chapter on gardens and the rhetoric of joy, which looks at the self-representations of the elderly antireformers when they were politically ostracized during Wang Anshi’s ascendancy and sought solace in their Luoyang gardens, reminds us how important the external, public world was in affecting manipulations of the private sphere.

Yugen Wang’s *Ten Thousand Scrolls: Reading and Writing in Huang Tingjian and the Late Northern Song* (Harvard University Press, 2012) looks at another set of issues in the literary and cultural history of the period. This is the first full-length study in English to explore the impact that the spread of printing during the Northern Song had on reading and writing. There has recently been new attention given to the spread of printing during the Song, challenging the conventional view that it was not until the Ming period that printing became widespread enough to warrant speaking of a “print culture” or

to measure the impact of print on Chinese society and thought. Wang's study is not focused on Song printing itself but rather on the way the advent of printing and consequent proliferation of books changed thinking about reading and writing. He argues that Huang Tingjian's notion of *fa* 法 (method) as applied to poetry composition is best understood as a response to the dramatic increase in the availability of books. The textual past now emerged as the primary source of poetic inspiration and language, and particular "methods" of digesting that textual record and creatively transforming it into new poetry were therefore developed. Huang Tingjian's insistence that reading "ten thousand scrolls" was essential training for the poet is part of this new method, as were his ideas about "transforming iron into gold" 点铁成金 and "snatching the embryo and changing the bones" 夺胎换骨, both of which pertain to transforming earlier poetic phrases. Huang is treated in this study not just as an individual theorist but as the foundational thinker of the Jiangxi School of poetry. An earlier study of Huang Tingjian, David Palumbo-Liu's *The Poetics of Appropriation: The Literary Theory and Practice of Huang Tingjian* (Stanford University Press, 1993), also concentrates on the centrality of borrowing or appropriation of earlier poetic phrases in Huang's poetic practice and thought. Palumbo-Liu treats this aspect of Huang's work exclusively from a literary viewpoint, arguing that Huang's acceptance of the notion that the poet must assimilate, transform, and extend earlier poetic usage, eclipsing his predecessors, sets him apart.

Ronald Egan's *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2006) looks at developments in poetics and other related fields, including epigraphy, treatises on flowering plants, art collecting, and the song lyric. In this book, Egan examines areas of aesthetic thought and pursuit that were new in the eleventh century and seeks to explore the connections between them. Ouyang Xiu was active as an innovator in at least three of the fields: he was the first to make a systematic and comprehensive collection of ancient rubbings and left voluminous colophons on them (*Ji gulu banwei* 集古录跋尾), he wrote the first *shihua* 诗话, and he wrote the earliest treatise on flowering plants (*Luoyang mudan ji* 洛阳牡丹记). In each field, Ouyang's work quickly gave rise to a spate of subsequent writings, and new fields of inquiry were established. *The Problem of Beauty* examines the difficulties that were faced by Ouyang and others as they sought to justify their interest in aesthetic objects and pursuits. Given Confucian misgivings about such "frivolous" matters, the pioneering writers had to constantly balance their enthusiasm for aesthetic objects with defenses and justifications. In addition to artworks, flowers, and poetics, the study also looks at eleventh-century expressions of romantic love (in the song lyric), positing parallels between the growing acceptance of the song lyric through the end of the Northern Song and developments in the other fields. A concluding chapter discusses links between these diverse fields of exploration and comments on the unprecedented openness late Northern Song literati show toward ideas and pursuits, many of them influenced by popular urban culture, for which their social class had historically had little tolerance. This study marks an effort to give attention to important areas of Song thought and expression that have tended to be overlooked in previous scholarship.

On the subject of Song literature in the context of cultural history, special note should be taken of a series of articles (not yet a book) by Stephen H. West on urban life in the Song capitals (especially Kaifeng), popular and court entertainment, imperial gardens, festivals, spectacle, and representations of the capital and its residents in poetry and other writings.⁵ West's earlier work was on the theater

of the Song, Jin, and Yuan periods (on which see below). He subsequently did a thorough study and meticulously annotated translation of *Dongjing menghua lu* 东京梦华录 (not yet published). In his articles, West probes what is new in this and other texts of the period in the way they give voice to a class of people described as “capital dwellers” 都人. While the Song emperor and court remain a ubiquitous presence in these Song representations of capital life, unprecedented attention is also given to the merchant class and commoners, in a way never seen in elite texts (e.g., literati poetry, imperial rescripts, memorials, etc.). West’s innovative approach to treatises on the capitals, elite texts, urban design, and paintings of the period, with special attention to urban space and the interaction (or separation) of social classes, points to new ways of exploring Song cultural history.

As for Song period song lyrics (*ci* 词), the genre has not quite received the amount of attention given to *shi* poetry. One wonders if the relative shortage of attention to the song lyric is not a function of how difficult it is to capture the unique qualities of the genre when translating and discussing it in English. *Shi* poetry, after all, translates more readily into English than does the song lyric. Moreover, English literature does not really have any major genre that bears close comparison to the Chinese song lyric, which makes it all the more challenging to explain the song lyric’s aesthetics and effects when writing in English. Despite these difficulties, the song lyric is a field of study among North American sinologists and one in which scholarship of real merit has been produced.

Among the earliest studies of the song lyric was James J. Y. Liu’s *Major Lyricists of the Northern Sung, A.D. 960–1126* (Princeton University Press, 1974). This was an effort to introduce major Northern Song writers in the genre in English. A few compositions by each major writer are presented in English translation, followed by a discussion of the literary traits of each piece. In the 1970s and 1980s, Professor Yu-kung Kao in the Department of Asian Languages at Princeton regularly taught graduate courses on the song lyric and mentored several PhD dissertations on the subject. One of his students there was Kang-i Sun Chang, who went on to have a distinguished career at Yale University. Her book of 1979, *The Evolution of Chinese Tz’u Poetry: From Late Tang to Northern Sung* (Princeton University Press) is considerably more ambitious. It describes with copious translated examples changes in the styles and subject range of the genre from the Late Tang (Wen Tingyun and Wei Zhuang), through the Five Dynasties, and on through the end of the Northern Song. This is the first richly analytic account of the genre in English.

Meanwhile, James R. Hightower at Harvard University had also turned his interest to the song lyric. His long-standing scholarly collaboration with Ye Jiaying 叶嘉莹 (Florence Chia-ying Yeh Chao) then of the University of British Columbia, came to focus primarily on the genre. In a series of ten lengthy articles on individual Song period authors, including two on the song lyric of the early Qing and Qing criticism on the genre, Hightower and Ye brought analysis of the song lyric to a new level of sophistication in English. These articles, published in the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* and other journals over the course of some twenty years, were later gathered together and conveniently republished, together with other essays by the two on *shi* poetry and Wang Guowei, in a volume titled *Studies in Chinese Poetry* (Harvard University Asia Center, 1998). In the republished version of the articles, all of the translations are accompanied by the Chinese text on the same page. Of course, Ye Jiaying’s essays on *shi* and *ci* in Chinese are as well known as they are numerous. Her essays on the song lyric written in collaboration with Hightower in English make their own special contribution.

There is first of all the value of the numerous translations of song lyrics in each article. The language of the song lyric presents particular difficulties. Rife as these works are with Song period colloquialisms and other vocabulary not often seen in standard *wenyan* texts, simply to establish the literal sense of many songs is a considerable challenge. Naturally, writing about the songs in English and presenting translations of them require Hightower and Ye to commit to a definitive English meaning for each and every line. For the student of Song *ci* there is much to learn from these renderings of the pieces into English by two scholars, each with years of experience as a reader of Song *ci*. Aside from the translations, the analysis of the stylistic qualities and the reconsideration of earlier Chinese criticism on each writer are full of insight. For example, Hightower and Ye were the first to point out the invalidity of the traditional way of reading Liu Yong's song lyrics as an autobiographical record of his own romantic involvement with singing girls. The two articles they wrote on Liu Yong are particularly rich with translations and discussions of the range of emotion and voices in his work. The article on Zhou Bangyan is also notable for its rejection of the widespread reading of that writer's song lyrics as political allegory. The authors go on, in that article, to give a particularly persuasive account of the aesthetics and psychological depth of Zhou Bangyan's work.

A few books devoted to particular song lyric writers or collections deserve notice. There are two volumes on famous Southern Song period writers: *The Transformation of the Chinese Lyrical Tradition: Chiang K'uei and Southern Sung Tz'u Poetry* (Princeton University Press, 1978), by Shuen-fu Lin, a student of Gao Yugong at Princeton; and *Wu Wenying and the Art of Southern Song Ci Poetry* (Princeton University Press, 1987), by Grace S. Fong, a student of Ye Jiaying at the University of British Columbia. Shuen-fu Lin's study goes to considerable lengths to link Jiang Kui's song lyrics, especially his *yongwu ci* 咏物词, to cultural shifts in the Southern Song, aesthetics, and politics. Lin analyzes what he terms the "retreat toward the object" in Jiang Kui as an innovative literary style that is deeply informed by a devotion to elegance and aesthetic ideals that characterized the late Southern Song. Grace S. Fong's study of Wu Wenying emphasizes the unconventional style of Wu's songs, suggesting that through his reliance on metonymic diction and syntactic density, and a preference for implicit meaning achieved through association rather than explicit logic, he consciously achieved an expressive style quite distinct from that of any earlier *ci* poet. A recent publication of great merit is Anna Shields's *Crafting a Collection: The Cultural Contexts and Poetic Practice of the Huajian ji* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2006). Although the subject of this study, *Huajian ji* 花间集, precedes the Song dynasty, it deserves mention here for the great influence that anthology had on the later song lyric, particularly that of the Northern Song. Shields's treatment of the anthology stands out for her analysis of it as an integral work representing the literary taste and court culture of the Later Shu kingdom that produced it. Rather than focusing on the individual poets represented in the anthology, Shields concentrates on the contents of the anthology, taken as a whole, for what it reveals about the intersection of court culture and literature in the tenth-century kingdom. Exploring the range of the anthology's representations of romance and desire, Shields invites us to consider *Huajian ji* in the tradition of romantic literature in China and to reflect on the significance of the predilection of Shu courtiers to write and perform these fictive lyrical songs that speak so artfully of "affairs of the heart."

At least one conference volume of collected general essays on the song lyric has been published, *Voices of the Song Lyric in China*, edited by Pauline Yu (University of California Press, 1994). This volume

contains essays by ten different specialists. The essays are grouped by theme “Defining the Song Lyric Voice: Questions of Genre,” “Man’s Voice/Woman’s Voice: Questions of Gender,” and “From Voice to Text: Questions of Genealogy.” Collectively, these essays constitute the most sustained effort in English to explore the intrinsic nature of the song lyric genre. Particularly important and innovative are the essays on *ci* from a feminist perspective (Grace Fong, John Timothy Wixted, Kang-i Sun Chang),⁶ on the song lyric and the valuation of “genuine” affection (Stephen Owen), on song lyric anthologies (Pauline Yu), and on the song lyric in the contexts of print history and communication technology (Stuart Sargent).⁷

The most recent general summaries of the history of the song lyric during the dynasty will be found in the two chapters on the literature of the period in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature* by Ronald Egan and Shuen-fu Lin (coauthored with Michael Fuller) respectively.⁸

As we move from Song to the Jin (1115–1234) and Yuan (1260–1368) dynasties, the focus and output of North American literary scholarship shifts noticeably. The center of attention changes to colloquial-language literature, especially the various dramatic forms, popular songs, and narrative ballads. A considerable amount of translation of these works has been done and some critical studies written as well. But, generally speaking, more effort has been put into translation than into literary history or analysis. Moreover, while there are many articles on particular dramas, playwrights, or collections, the fields of Jin and Yuan literary studies have not developed to a degree anything like that of literary studies on the Song, either in the number of scholars working in them or the steady output of scholarly monographs. If anything there may be fewer North American scholars working on Yuan period literature today than there were thirty years ago. If that is so, it must be largely a consequence of changes among senior faculty in a few of the American centers for Chinese studies (e.g., at the University of Michigan and University of California, Berkeley). Particularly underdeveloped areas are those of Jin and Yuan poetry and other literary-language literature. Some fine studies have been produced, but numerically they are few, and the gaps in coverage remain much larger than the topics that have been addressed. In view of this dearth of studies, the sizable chapter on the Jin and Yuan that Stephen H. West has written for the *Cambridge History of Chinese Literature* has special importance.⁹ Many of the sources and topics he discusses are treated for the very first time in English. His chapter is thus more exploratory than it is summary of previous scholarship. There is an older, general introduction to Jin and Yuan poetry available in English: the Japanese survey by Yoshikawa Kōjirō, which includes Ming poetry, translated by John Timothy Wixted as *Five Hundred Years of Chinese Poetry, 1150–1650* (Princeton University Press, 1989).

There are two very substantial, general studies of vernacular drama, as well as multiple translations. J. I. Crump’s *Chinese Theater in the Days of Kublai Khan* (University of Arizona Press, 1980) consists of two parts: “Behind the Scenes,” some two hundred pages of background information on Yuan period theaters, stages, and the actors art; and “The Dramas,” full translations of three famous *zaju* 杂剧 plays. Crump’s account is supplemented by another, larger in scope: *Chinese Theater 1100–1450: A Source Book*, by Wilt Idema and Stephen H. West (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1982). This work discusses all manner of theatrical performances from the period (the temporary stage, temple stage, commercial theater, and imperial stage), as well as entertainment songs, narrative ballads (*zhugongdiao* 诸宫调), and other diverse forms of entertainment. The authors provide extensive translations of

contemporary descriptions of these entertainments from a rich array of Song, Jin, Yuan, and Ming period texts, including treatises on capitals, literary collections, specialized works on drama, vernacular novels, and *biji*. “We hope that such a study,” the authors state in their introduction, “of theater life of this period, of theaters and stages, of actors and actresses, of their organizations, their performances and their lives, and of their relations with authors and public . . . will be a contribution to the study and appreciation of the rich dramatic literature of the period” (1). Chapters 5–7 present full translations of three Yuan period dramas: a southern play (*ximen* 戏文) preserved in the *Yongle dadian*, and two *zaju* preserved in Yuan and Ming collections, respectively. The authors’ comments on the provenance and textual history of these works sheds considerable light on the transformation of “Yuan” dramas through their later publication. A final chapter is devoted to theater in the time of the early Ming playwright Zhu Youdun 朱有燉 and translates three of his plays as well. It should be noted that the same two scholars collaborated on a related project, the English translation of Wang Shifu’s 王实甫 (ca. 1250–1300) *Xixiang ji* 西厢记, *The Moon and the Zither: The Story of the Western Wing* (University of California Press, 1991; reissued in paperback as Wang Shifu, *The Story of the Western Wing*, 1994). Complete with an extensive introduction and notes on the text, this is the best of several translations of *Xixiang ji* into English.

Translations with critical introductions of important *zhuogongdiao* include the following two works: *Ballad of the Hidden Dragon* (*Liu Chih-yuan chu-kung-tiao*), translated by M. Doležalová-Velingerová and James I. Crump Jr. (Oxford University Press, 1971); and *Master Tung’s Western Chamber Romance* (*Tung Hsi-hsiang chu-kung-tiao*): *A Chinese Chantefable*, translated by Li-li Chen (Cambridge University Press, 1976). Studies of *sanqu* 散曲 and songs in northern drama include James I. Crump, *Song-Poems from Xanada* (Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1993); Dale R. Johnson, *Yuan Music Dramas: Studies in Prosody and Structure and A Complete Catalogue of Northern Arias in the Dramatic Style* (Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1980); and Wayne Schlep, *San-ch’ü: Its Technique and Imagery* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1970).

As for Yuan dynasty poetry, two studies stand out. There is Frederick W. Mote’s volume on the life and works of the late Yuan–early Ming poet Gao Qi, *The Poet Kao Ch’i, 1336–1374* (Princeton University Press, 1962), and Richard John Lynn’s *Kuan Yun-shih* (Twayne, 1980). On Jin poetry and poetics, there is John Timothy Wixted’s *Poems on Poetry: Literary Criticism by Yuan Hao-wen (1190–1257)* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1982). Wixted’s volume, based on his Oxford University PhD dissertation, is an exhaustive translation and analysis of Yuan Haowen’s famous series of thirty quatrains on poetry (*lunshi sanshi shou* 论诗三十首). Also of note is a conference volume on Jin dynasty cultural history edited by Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Stephen H. West, *China under Jurchen Rule: Essays on Chin Intellectual and Cultural History* (State University of New York Press, 1995). The volume includes several essays on literati thought and learning, art, poetry, and the *zhuogongdiao*.

Last, although there are several North American scholarly journals that regularly publish articles on Song, Jin, and Yuan period literature (*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, etc.), there is only one journal that is specifically devoted to this span of Chinese history: *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* (<http://www.humanities.uci.edu/eastasian/SungYuan/JSYS/index.htm>). As the Chinese version of the journal title suggests (《宋遼金元》), the coverage is not limited to the two empires designated in the English-language title.

The journal is published annually, and each issue contains articles, research reports, book reviews, news of the field, and abstracts of recent dissertations. Of particular note are the “state of the field” essays that also regularly appear, as are the bibliographic accounts of recent scholarship, especially in Japanese. The majority of the articles focus on topics in Song history (political, social, intellectual), but articles on Song, Jin, and Yuan literature also regularly appear.

Notes

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¹ Stuart Sargent, “Can Latecomers Get There First? Song Poets and Tang Poetry,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 4.2 (1982): 165–98; Jonathan Chaves, “Not the Way of Poetry,” *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews (CLEAR)* 4.2 (1982): 199–212.

² J. D. Schmidt, *Yang Wan-li* (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1976); *Stone Lake: The Poetry of Fan Chengda (1126–1193)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

³ Ronald Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1994); *The Literary Works of Ou-yang Hsiu (1007–72)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

⁴ Michael Fuller's book, *Drifting among Rivers and Lakes: Southern Song Dynasty Poetry and the Problem of Literary History*, will be published by Harvard University Press in 2013. His articles include “Aesthetics and Meaning in Experience: A Theoretical Perspective on Zhu Xi's Revision of Song Dynasty Views of Poetry,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65.2 (2005): 311–55; “中國詩歌經驗的理論闡釋: 對宋詩史的反思緒言,” “Theoretical Hermeneutics of the Experience of Chinese Poetry: Preliminary Reflections on the History of Song Dynasty Poetry,” *Xin Song xue* 新宋學 1 (2001): 167–81; and “North and South: The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries” (coauthored with Shuen-fu Lin), in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Stephen Owen and Kang-i Sun Chang, vol. 1, chap. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁵ Stephen H. West, “The Interpretation of a Dream: The Sources, Influence, and Evaluation of the Dongjing meng Hua lu,” *T'oung Pao* 71 (1985): 63–108 (Chinese translation: 釋夢: “《東京夢華錄》的來源, 評價與影響,” 《美中國古典文學研究名家十年文選》, 樂黛雲、陳珏編選 [南京, 江蘇人民出版社, 1996], 514–46); “Playing with Food: Food, Performance, and the Aesthetics of Artificiality in the Sung and Yuan,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 57.1 (1997): 67–106; “The Emperor Sets the Pace: Court and Consumption in the Northern Song,” in *Selected Essays on Court Culture in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Lin Yaofu (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2000), 25–50; “Spectacle, Ritual, and Social Relations: The Son of Heaven, Citizens, and Created Space in Imperial Gardens in the Northern Song,” in *Baroque Garden Cultures: Emulation, Sublimation, Subversion*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2004), 291–321 (Chinese translation: “奇觀、儀式、社會、關係: 北宋御苑中的天子、子民和空間建構,” 《城市與園林》 [Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 2006], 18–45); “皇后、葬禮、油餅與豬—《東京夢華錄》和都市文學的興起,” 《文學、文化與世變》 “Empresses, Burial Rites, Pancakes, and Pigs: Dongjing menghua lu and the Rise of Urban Literature” (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2002), 197–218; “Meng Yuanlao, ‘Recollections of the Northern Song Capital,’” in *Hawai'i Reader in Traditional Chinese*, ed. Victor H. Mair and Paul R. Goldin (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 405–22; “Gardens and Imagination in Song and Yuan Gardens,” in *Gardens and Imagination: Cultural History and Agency*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2007), 41–66.

⁶ Grace S. Fong, “Engendering the Lyric: Her Image and Voice in the Song,” 107–44; John Timothy Wixted, “The Poetry of Li Ch’ing-chao: A Woman Author and Woman’s Authorship,” 145–68; Kang-i Sun Chang, “Liu Shih and Hsü Ts’an: Feminine or Feminist,” 169–90; all in *Voices of the Song Lyric in China*, ed. Pauline Yu (University of California Press, 1994).

⁷ Stephen Owen, “Meaning the Words: The Genuine as a Value in the Tradition of the Song Lyric,” 30–69; Pauline Yu, “Song Lyrics and the Canon: A Look at Anthologies of Tz’u,” 70–106; Stuart Sargent, “Contexts of the Song Lyric in Song Times: Communication Technology, Social Change, Morality,” 226–58. all in *Voices of the Song Lyric in China*, ed. Pauline Yu (University of California Press, 1994).

⁸ Ronald Egan, “The Northern Song (1020–1126)”;

Michael Fuller and Shuen-fu Lin, “North and South: The Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Stephen Owen and Kang-i Sun Chang, chaps. 5 and 6, respectively (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁹ Stephen H. West, “Literature from the Late Jin to the Early Ming: ca. 1230–ca. 1375,” in *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, ed. Stephen Owen and Kang-i Sun Chang, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Ming and Qing Literature

Wilt L. Idema

European sinology, which in the nineteenth century initially paid considerable attention to the study of traditional Chinese fiction and drama, had by the first half of the twentieth century become focused on early Chinese history and thought, relying heavily on the philological scholarship of the Qing. One of the earliest European centers of sinology that reflected the new developments in the study of Chinese literature in China following the May Fourth Movement was Prague, where Jaroslav Prusek played a leading role in stimulating the study of traditional vernacular fiction, late Qing literature, and modern *baihua* writings, but unfortunately the Cold War for a long time greatly limited the impact of the Czech school of sinology in Europe and beyond. The impact of the May Fourth Movement and its reevaluation of premodern literature was much more clearly felt in the departments of East Asian languages and literatures that emerged in North America following World War II. One reason for this was that these departments were modeled on the departments of European languages and literatures; another was that the Chinese sections of these departments often were partly staffed by scholars from China, whose training reflected the new status of traditional vernacular literature in modern China. As a result, the study of the literature of the Ming and Qing dynasties flourished throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

Vernacular Fiction

The study of the Chinese literature of the Ming and Qing dynasties in North America has, not surprisingly therefore, long been dominated by the study of vernacular fiction.¹ Two scholars, C. T. Hsia and Patrick Hanan, stand out from an early date in this field for their signal contributions. Hsia presented in his *The Classic Chinese Novel: A Critical Introduction* of 1968 detailed discussions of each of the six “classic novels.” In each chapter he provided an up-to-date account of the development and textual history of one novel, followed by his own sensitive and original reading of it. While doing so, he lashed out against the vulgar Marxist interpretations that were produced in the People’s Republic in the 1950s and 1960s. His own standard for novelistic perfection was the great realistic novels of nineteenth-century Europe, and measured against that standard he found all traditional Chinese novels wanting. While he has been criticized for this negative attitude, his work has otherwise stood the test of time very well, and it is still in print. Whereas C. T. Hsia presented himself primarily as a critic of premodern and modern fiction, Patrick Hanan presented himself more as a literary historian and translator. Hanan established his reputation with his superb articles on the textual history and date of the *Jin Ping Mei*.² He then turned his attention to the study of the vernacular story (*huaben*). Following a series of magisterial studies mostly published in the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, he

published two monographs on the subject. His *The Chinese Short Story: Studies in Dating, Authorship, and Composition* of 1973 divided the vernacular stories published up to 1627 into three groups in terms of date of composition: an early period, from 1250 to 1450; a middle period, from 1400 to 1550, and a late period, 1500 to 1627. This is still the most objective and detailed study of *huaben*, and the correctness of its meticulous methodology was proven in a spectacular way by the discovery in 1979 of the final page of a fourteenth-century printing of an individual *huaben* because the fragment ended exactly where, according to Hanan, a later writer had added an expansion.³ Hanan did not dwell on the “oral” nature of these vernacular stories, but treated these texts as a genre of written literature from the beginning. On the basis of this 1973 monograph, he then published *The Chinese Vernacular Story* (1981), which presented a densely documented critical introduction to the development of *huaben* up to the end of the seventeenth century, on the basis of those collections that were available outside the People’s Republic at that time. In contrast to C. T. Hsia and others, who had stressed “the limitations of Chinese fiction,” Hanan argued that traditional Chinese vernacular fiction showed all the characteristics of “formal realism” as described by Ian Watts in his *The Rise of the Novel* as characteristic of the eighteenth-century English novel.

Patrick Hanan, who had dealt with the *huaben* by Li Yu in his *The Chinese Vernacular Story* would go on to present an all-around study of the writings of that author as *The Invention of Li Yu* in 1988, in which he stressed that author’s wit. He also extensively translated from Li Yu’s vernacular stories, while his rendition of *Rouputuan* appeared in 1990 as *The Carnal Prayer Mat*.⁴ While some of Patrick Hanan’s students worked on novels of the eighteenth century, he himself rarely if ever published on that period. He published, however, a number of highly original articles on the innovations in narratorial strategy in nineteenth-century and late Qing fiction, and on the impact of westerners on nineteenth-century vernacular fiction through their translations, their original compositions, and the organization of fiction competitions. These articles have been collectively published as *Chinese Fiction of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (2004). Hanan’s most recent publication is a full translation of the Yangzhou novel *Fengyue meng* as *Courtesans and Opium: Romantic Illusions of the Fool of Yangzhou* (2009). In an earlier article he had characterized this as China’s first true city novel.

A next generation of scholars manifested themselves in the 1970s. Andrew H. Plaks established his reputation with the publication of his *Archetype and Allegory in the Dream of the Red Chamber* in 1976. In this study he analyzed the novel as structured by means of “bipolar complementarity.” He also was innovative in his use of traditional commentaries to the novel, which he mined for his critical insights. He later would take a leading role in the revival of interest in Qing fiction commentary. This resulted in the publication of *How to Read the Chinese Novel* (edited by David Rolston) of 1990.⁵ This book provided studies and translations of the *dufa* of the six classic novels. Plaks also made good use of the traditional commentaries in his *The Four Masterworks of Ming Fiction: Ssu-ta ch’i-shu* (1987). This work provided detailed readings of the meaning and structure of *Sanguo yanyi*, *Shuibu zhuan*, *Xiyou ji*, and *Jin Ping Mei*, set against a magisterial survey of Ming cultural history. Plaks identified self-cultivation as the shared theme of these four novels and stressed the ironic distance between the authors and the characters they describe, strongly arguing for the artistic maturity of these novels as works of fiction.⁶

Robert E. Hegel was a student of C. T. Hsia and wrote a dissertation on the novels dealing with the founding of the Tang dynasty. His first monograph was *The Novel in Seventeenth Century China*

(1981). He later published *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China* (1998), which researched late Ming novels as physical objects. As the title indicates, Hegel is especially interested in the often superb illustrations of this period, their development, and the ways in which they may have affected the reading of the text. Both Andrew Plaks and Robert Hegel have supervised many PhD students who have gone on to publish and establish their own reputations. This also applies to Anthony Yu, who established his reputation in this field with his articles on *Xiyou ji* and his complete annotated translation of this one-hundred-chapter novel in four volumes as *The Journey to the West* (1977–83).⁷ Anthony Yu would later direct his attention to the *Honglou meng*, on which he would publish *Rereading the Stone: Desire and the Making of Fiction in Dream of the Red Chamber* (1997).

Of the leading scholars of the “third generation,” one has to mention Keith McMahon and Martin Huang. McMahon’s *Causality and Containment in Seventeenth Century Fiction* (1988) was an original study of late Ming erotic fiction. He provided a detailed account of the male-female relations in Qing dynasty fiction in his *Misers, Shrews, and Polygamists: Sexuality and Male-Female Relations in Eighteenth-Century Chinese Fiction* (1995). Huang’s first monograph, *Literati and Self-Re/Presentation: Autobiographical Sensibility in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (1995), focused on the eighteenth-century novel *Rulin waishih*. He has since published *Desire and Fictional Narrative in Late Imperial China* (2001) and *Negotiating Masculinities in Late Imperial China* (2006), while also editing *Snakes’ Legs: Sequels, Continuations, Rewritings, and Chinese Fiction* (2004), a collection of studies on *xushu*.

The *Sanguozhi yanyi* has been rendered into English by Moss Roberts as *Three Kingdoms: A Historical Novel Attributed to Luo Guanzhong* (1992). While the novel has attracted a number of dissertations, none has been reworked and published as a monograph. *Three Kingdoms and Chinese Culture* (2007), a recent collection of articles edited by Kimberley Besio and Constantine Tung, is not exclusively focused on the novel but treats the Three Kingdoms cultural complex more generally. Shelley Hsueh-lun Wang’s *History and Legend: Ideas and Images in the Ming Historical Novel* (1990) provides a solid general survey of the *yanyi* novel. The *Shuihu zhuan*, however, was the subject matter of the first American monograph on a traditional Chinese novel, Richard G. Irwin’s *The Evolution of a Chinese Novel: Shui-hu-chuan* (1953). A second monograph on the novel, however, would only appear in 2001 when Ge Liangyan published his *Out of the Margins: The Rise of Chinese Vernacular Fiction. Xiyou ji and Jin Ping Mei* have been more popular with Western scholars. Glen Dudbridge published his *The Hsi-yu chi: A Study of the Antecedents to the Sixteenth-Century Novel* in 1970. The relations between the different versions of the novel, the attribution of the novel to Wu Cheng’en, the origin of the character of Su Wukong, and the allegorical meaning of the novel have continued to stir controversy. Li Qiancheng’s *Fictions of Enlightenment: Journey to the West, Tower of Myriad Mirrors, and Dream of the Red Chamber* (2004) traces the theme of enlightenment from *Xiyou ji* by way of *xiyou bu* to *Honglou meng*. A complete and extensively annotated translation of the *Jin Ping Mei* is being prepared by David Roy as *The Plum in the Golden Vase, or, Chin P’ing Mei*. So far four of the planned five volumes have appeared (1993). Roy has suggested Tang Xianzu as the author of this novel. His student Katherine Carlitz published *The Rhetoric of Chin p’ing mei* (1986). A stridently feminist critique of the novel has been presented by Ding Naifei in her *Obscene Things: Sexual Politics in Jin Ping Mei* (2002).

Some of the seventeenth-century sequels to these novels have also been studied. Ellen Widmer’s *The Margins of Utopia: Shui-hu hou-chuan and the Literature of Ming Loyalism* (1987) places the novel’s

author, Chen Chen, in the milieu of Ming loyalists. Dong Yue's *Xiyou bu* has been translated into English by Shuen-fu Lin and Larry Schutz as *Tower of Myriad Mirrors: A Supplement to Journey to the West, by Tung Yüeh* (1978), while its author was the subject of a monograph by Frederick W. Brandauer entitled *Tung Yüeh* (1978). As for original novels of the seventeenth century, Philip Clart has recently published an English translation of Yang Erzeng's *Han Xiangzi quanzhuan* as *The Story of Han Xiangzi: The Alchemical Adventures of a Daoist Immortal* (2007). Yenna Wu has devoted a monograph to the mid-seventeenth-century novel *Xingshi yinyuan zhuan*, under the title *Ameliorative Satire and the Seventeenth-Century Chinese Novel Xingshi yinyuan zhuan: Marriage as Retribution, Awakening the World* (1999).⁸ She had earlier devoted a monograph to the popularity of the theme of the shrew in seventeenth-century fiction and drama, *The Chinese Virago: A Literary Theme* (1995). There is no space here to list the many anthologies of translated vernacular stories from this period, but mention has to be made of the complete translation of all 120 stories contained in Feng Menglong's *Sanyan* by Yang Shuhui and Yunqin Yang. Their *Stories Old and New: A Ming Dynasty Collection* (2000) offers all 40 stories in *Gujin xiaoshuo (Yushi mingyan)*; *Stories to Caution the World: A Ming Dynasty Collection* (2005) presents all 40 stories in *Jingshi tongyan*; and *Stories to Awaken the World: A Ming Dynasty Collection* (2009) renders all 40 stories in *Xingshi hengyan*. The wide-ranging nature and startling originality of Tina Lu's reading of seventeenth-century fiction is clear from the title of her latest book, *Accidental Incest, Filial Cannibalism, and other Peculiar Encounters in Late Imperial Chinese Literature* (2008).

As might be expected, Wu Jingzi's *Rulin waishi* and Cao Xueqin's *Honglou meng* are the eighteenth-century novels that have attracted the most attention. Monographic studies on the *Rulin waishi* that have to be mentioned include Timothy Wong, *Wu Ching-tzu* (1978); Paul C. Ropp, *Dissent in Early Modern China: Ju-lin wai-shih and Ch'ing Social Criticism* (1981); and Stephen Roddy, *Literati Identity and Its Fictional Representations in Late Imperial China* (1998). More recently, Shang Wei in his *Rulin waishi and Cultural Transformation in Late Imperial China* (2003) has read Wu jingzi's novel as a fundamental critique of the ritualism of the early Qing. We already mentioned the studies on the *Honglou meng* by Andrew Plaks and Anthony Yu. Other notable titles include Lucien Miller, *Masks of Fiction in Dream of the Red Chamber: Myth, Mimesis, and Persona* (1975); Jing Wang, *The Story of Stone: Intertextuality, Ancient Chinese Stone Lore, and the Stone Symbolism of Dream of the Red Chamber*, Water Margin, and *The Journey to the West* (1992); Wai-ye Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment: Love and Illusion in Chinese Literature* (1993); Louis P. Edwards, *Men and Women in Qing China: Gender in the Red Chamber Dream* (1994); and Xiao Chi, *The Chinese Garden as a Lyric Enclave: A Generic Study of The Story of the Stone* (2001). Dore Levy's *Ideal and Actual in The Story of the Stone* (1999) was written as a basic introduction to the novel for undergraduates.

The vernacular fiction of the nineteenth century has long been relatively ignored in Western scholarship, partly, no doubt, because of the critical dismissal of these late traditional works by Lu Xun in his *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe*. For instance, one of the most substantial studies to date on Li Ruzhen's *Jinghua yuan* is still C. Hsia's essay in Andrew H. Plaks, ed., *Chinese Narrative: Critical and Theoretical Essays* (1977).⁹ Ellen Widmer, in her *The Beauty and the Book* (2006), has shown how the appearance of the *Honglou meng* and *Jinghua yuan* also turned women into readers of fiction. The vernacular fiction of the final two decades of the Qing dynasty has fared somewhat better. Harold Shadick translated Liu E's twenty-chapter *Laocan youji* as early as 1952 as *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*.¹⁰ Milena Doleželová-

Velingerová, a student of Jaroslav Prusek, edited a collection of studies on late Qing novels, mostly written by her Canadian students, in 1980, as *The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century*. That same year also saw the publication of Peter Li's biography of Zeng Pu (*Tseng P'u*, 1980), followed a year later by Douglas Lancashire's biography of Li Boyuan (*Li Po-yuan*, 1981), while some late Qing novels also appeared in abridged translations. The one publication that most contributed to a reevaluation of the fiction of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth was David Wang's *Fin-de-Siècle Splendor: Repressed Modernities of Late Qing Fiction, 1849–1911* (1997), which covered a host of hitherto ignored works and strongly stressed their experimental character, in this way arguing for a native Chinese tradition of modernity in the years when China was increasingly confronted with the cultural pressures of imperialism. This reevaluation not only covers the political novels of the late Qing but also the “novels of depravity” (to use the terminology of Lu Xun's *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilüe* in its 1959 translation by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang as *A Brief History of Chinese Fiction*), as is demonstrated by Chlöe F. Starr's *Red-Light Novels of the Late Qing* (2007). Zhang Ailing's rewritten version of Han Bangqing's *Haishang hualiezhuan* is now available in English translation as *The Sing-Song Girls of Shanghai*, first translated by Eileen Chang and revised and edited by Eva Hung (2005). Theodore Hutters, *Bringing the World Home: Appropriating the West in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (2005) focuses in the middle part of this work on a number of late Qing novels thematizing the East-West encounter, but his discussion of intellectual developments covers the period from 1895 to 1919. Hu Ying, in her *Tales of Translation: Composing the New Woman in China, 1899–1918* (2000), focuses on novels and other texts that presented new models of female behavior.

The scholarly respectability of Jin Yong's modern martial arts fiction also has enhanced the status of nineteenth-century examples of the genre. One of the earliest such examples is studied by Margaret B. Wan in *Green Peony and the Rise of the Chinese Martial Arts Novel* (2009). The novels featuring the mad monk Jigong are studied by Meir Shahar in *Crazy Ji: Chinese Religion and Popular Literature* (1998).

Classical Fiction

For many decades the picture of the classical fiction of the Ming and the Qing dynasties had been dominated by Pu Songling and his *Liaozhai zhiyi*, but studies were rare and far between. This situation would only change in the 1980s, when Alan Barr published a number of substantial articles: “The Textual Transmission of *Liaozhai zhiyi*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 44, no. 2 (1984): 515–62; and “A Comparative Study of Early Late Tales in *Liaozhai zhiyi*,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 45, no. 1 (1985): 157–202. Judith Zeitlin's *Historian of the Strange: Pu Songling and the Chinese Classical Tale* (1993) presents a critical reading of the collection through a careful reading of its prefaces and selected tales. Alan Barr has continued to publish articles on selected aspects of *Liaozhai zhiyi* in a variety of venues; he also contributed a detailed chapter on the collections of classical tales of the (Ming and) Qing to Victor Mair, ed., *The Columbia History of China* (2001). Judith Zeitlin's most recent monograph is her *The Phantom Heroine: Ghost and Gender in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Literature* (2007). Despite the publication of a number of new anthologies, we still lack a complete English-language translation of *Liaozhai zhiyi*.¹¹

When discussing the sources of some well-known *huaben*, Patrick Hanan had remarked on the quality and variety of the classical tale of the late Ming. In more recent years, Richard Wang has published on the popularity of the “middle-length classical tale” during the sixteenth century, which he basically studied as a product of the publishing boom of the Wanli period and beyond. Singchen Lydia Chiang has studied the classical tale of the Qing dynasty, and in her *Collecting the Self: Body and Identity in Strange Tale Collections of Late Imperial China* (2004) she not only applies her Freudian readings to some usually overlooked stories in *Liaozhai zhiyi* but also discusses the materials in Yuan Mei’s *Zibuyu* and Ji Yun’s *Yuewei caotang biji*. Both Rania Huntington, *Alien Kind: Foxes in Late Imperial Chinese Narrative* (2003), and Kang Xiaofei, *The Cult of the Fox: Power, Gender, and Popular Religion in Late Imperial and Modern China* (2006), have studied the lore of the fox in northern China and its literary transformation in the classical tales of the Qing.

Drama

The study of traditional Chinese drama was long dominated by the study of Yuan *zaju*. Studies of Ming *zaju* were rare. One of the exceptions was Jeane Faurot, who published on Xu Wei and his *Sisheng yuan*. More recently the same author has attracted the attention of Anne Hsiung and He Mingyu. The most important study of the *zaju* of the first century of the Ming is Wilt Idema’s *The Dramatic Oeuvre of Chu Yu-tun (1379–1439)* (1985). This work not only discusses the thirty-one *zaju* of this imperial prince one by one but also provides a sketch of the playwrights who were active in the generation before him, at the end of the fourteenth century. The translations of two plays by Zhu Youdun were included in Wilt Idema and Stephen H. West, *Chinese Theater, 1100–1450: A Source Book* (1982).

For decades the leading scholar in the field of Ming and Qing dynasty *chuanqi* plays was Cyril Birch. His superb translation of Tang Xianzu’s masterwork, *Mudan ting*, appeared in 1980 as *The Peony Pavilion (Mudan ting)*. A revised edition, with an introduction by Cathrine Swatek, was published in 2002. Cyril Birch also provided a full translation of Meng Chenshun’s *Jiao Hong ji* as *Mistress and Maid (Jiaohongji) by Meng Chengshun* (2001). One of his other publications is a short anthology of scenes from Ming dynasty *chuanqi* entitled *Scenes for Mandarins* (1995). Birch also collaborated with Chen Shih-hsiang and Harold Acton on the English translation of Kong Shangren’s *Taobua shan* as the *Peach Blossom Fan* (1976).

Mudan ting and *Taobua shan* are also the *chuanqi* that have generated the greatest body of scholarship in English. Studies on “the cult of *qing*” of the late Ming and its later ramifications always start with an analysis of *Mudan ting*. Examples include Wai-ye Li’s *Enchantment and Disenchantment*, which traces “the cult of *qing*” from *Mudan ting* through *Liaozhai zhiyi* to the *Honglou meng*. Another example is Martin Huang’s *Desire and Fictional Narrative*. The history of the performance of *Mudan ting*, from performances in its own time to its adaptations for Kunqu, the rise of *zhezixi*, and the conflict-ridden revival of the full play in 1999, is the subject of Catherine Swatek’s *Peony Pavilion Onstage: Four Centuries in the Career of a Chinese Drama* (2001). Tina Lu offered highly original readings of both *Mudan ting* and *Taobuashan* in her *Persons, Roles, and Minds: Identity in Peony Pavilion and Peach Blossom Fan* (2001). Richard Strassberg devoted a biography to Kong Shangren entitled *The World of K’ung Shang-jen, a Man of Letters in Early Ch’ing China* (1983). Other scholars have published on the relationship between history and fiction in *Taobuashan*. Whereas in earlier decades scholars tended to focus on a single genre,

in recent years scholars writing on various aspects of the elite culture of the long seventeenth century, such as Wai-yee Li and Judith Zeitlin, freely range over different literary genres, from classical poetry and prose to drama and fiction.

Scholarship on theater and drama of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has focused on the rise of regional opera, especially Peking Opera, and rarely deals with drama as text. One of the rare exceptions to this trend is the attention lavished on *Qiaoying*, a one-act play by the female playwright and poet Wu Zao, which has been translated into English three times, by Sophie Volpp as *Drinking Wine and Reading 'Encountering Sorrow': A Reflection in Disguise*, by Wu Zao (1799–1862), in Susan Mann and Yu-yin Cheng, eds., *Under Confucian Eyes*, 239–50 (2001); by Wilt Idema and Beata Grant as *The Fake Image* in their *The Red Brush*, 687–93 (2004); and most recently by Shu-chu Wei, as *Qiaoying* (The Image in Disguise), by Wu Zao, *Chinoperl Papers* 26 (2005–6): 171–80. *Fanhua meng*, a *chuanqi* play by the eighteenth-century female playwright Wang Yun has been edited and translated by Wu Qingyun as *A Dream of Glory (Fanhua meng): A Chinese Play by Wang Yun* (2007). The upsurge in drama composition during the final years of the Qing so far seems not to have attracted the attention of scholars in North America.

Classical Poetry and Nonfiction Prose

The study of classical poetry and prose of the Ming and Qing dynasties is still very much an underdeveloped field. The overwhelming majority of scholars in the field of classical Chinese poetry have preferred to concentrate on earlier periods. For a long time the only three monographs on Ming and Qing period poetry in English were Arthur Waley's *Yüan Mei, Eighteenth Century Chinese Poet* (1956); Frederic W. Mote's study of Gao Qi, *The Poet Kao Ch'i, 1336–1374* (1962); and Shirleen S. Wong's biography of Gong Zizhen, *Kung Tzu-chen* (1973). The above-mentioned titles all provide a survey of the life and works of the author concerned. General anthologies of Chinese literature tended to be very sparing in their coverage of the classical poetry and prose of the Ming and Qing dynasties, but English readers could obtain a fuller picture of late imperial poetry from two anthologies that both appeared in 1986: Jonathan Chaves, trans., *The Columbia Book of Later Chinese Poetry: Yüan, Ming, and Ch'ing Dynasties (1279–1911)*; and Irving Yucheng Lo and William Schultz, eds., *Waiting for the Unicorn: Poems and Lyrics of China's Last Dynasty, 1644–1911*. Jonathan Chaves later would publish a monograph devoted to Wu Li, a Christian poet and painter of the seventeenth century, under the title *Singing of the Source: Nature and God in the Poetry of the Chinese Painter Wu Li* (1993). A few years earlier Chi-p'ing Chou had published his monograph on Yuan Hongdao as *Yüan Hung-tao and the Kung-an School* (1988).

The revival of lyrics (*ci*) as a major genre of poetry in the first half of the seventeenth century was reflected in David R. McCraw, *Chinese Lyricists of the Seventeenth Century* (1990); it also was a major topic in Kang-i Sun-Chang's study of the life and loves of Chen Zilong, *The Late Ming Poet Ch'en Tzu-lung: Crisis of Love and Loyalism* (1991). Adele Austin Ricket had provided an extensively introduced translation of Wang Guowei's *Renjian shibua* as early as 1977 in her *Wang Kuo-wei's Jen-chien Tzu-bua: A Study in Chinese Literary Criticism*.

Recent years have seen the publication of a number of important monographs and edited volumes. Daniel Bryant's *The Great Recreation: Ho Ching-ming (1483–1521) and His World* (2008) offers an extensive biography of He Jingming, a complete translation of his preserved poems, and a study in the poetics

of the Former Seven Masters. Wai-ye Li has published extensively on the poetry of the seventeenth century in a wide variety of venues, for instance, in her contributions to Wilt L. Idema, Wai-ye Li, and Ellen Widmer, eds., *Trauma and Transcendence in Early Qing Literature* (2006). Tobie Meyer-Fong has discussed the role anthologies played in that same period in bringing together Ming loyalists and Qing officials in her *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou* (2003). J. D. Schmidt has published a voluminous study on the poetry of Yuan Mei, illustrated with many translations, in his *Harmony Garden: The Life, Literary Criticism, and Poetry of Yuan Mei (1716–1799)* (2003). He had earlier published an extensive life-and-works study devoted to Huang Zunxian, *Within the Human Realm: The Poetry of Huang Zunxian, 1848–1905* (1994). The latter author, especially his Japanese period, has attracted the attention of Richard Lynn, who has also published on the poetics of Wang Shizhen. A number of leading poets of the final years of the Qing are the subject of Jon Kowallis, *The Subtle Revolution: Poetry of the “Old Schools” during the Late Qing and Early Republican China* (2006).¹²

Publications on Ming and Qing nonfiction prose are even rarer than publications on Ming and Qing poetry. Despite the ubiquitous presence of the eight-legged essay (*baguwen*) in Ming and Qing elite society, publications on the subject are limited to a few articles and chapters. Kai-wing Chow's *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China* (2004) focuses on the publishing of examination essays in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I already mentioned Chi-p'ing Chou's study on Yuan Hongdao, which also pays attention to his prose writings.¹³ Li Chi published a selection of the travel writings of Xu Xiake as *The Travel Diaries of Hsu Hsia-k'o*, in 1974, but the only English-language monograph on Xu Xiake was written by a Briton (Julian Ward, *Xu Xiake [1587–1641]: The Art of Travel Writing*, 2001). The only English-language book-length study of the writings of Chen Jiru was written by an Australian (Jamie Greenbaum, *Chen Jiru [1558–1639]: The Background to Development and Subsequent Uses of Literary Personae*, 2007). For studies on the early Qing prose of Zhang Dai, see Philip A. Kalafas, *In Limpid Dream: Nostalgia and Zhang Dai's Reminiscences of the Ming* (2007), and Jonathan D. Spence, *Return to Dragon Mountain: Memories of a Late Ming Man* (2007).

Women's Literature

The last two decades have witnessed a remarkable increase of interest in women's poetry of the Ming and Qing dynasties.¹⁴ This reflects the influence of both the third wave of feminism in Chinese studies and the rising number of women scholars of Chinese literature. A leading role in this development was played by Kang-I Sun Chang, who in her monograph on Chen Zilong pointed out the impact of the young courtesan Liu Shi on Chen Zilong's development as a poet. Her essay on the available anthologies of women's poetry, “A Guide to Ming-Ch'ing Anthologies of Female Poetry and Their Selection Strategies,” *Gest Library Journal* 5 (1992): 119–60, was extremely helpful to other scholars in the field. Together with Ellen Widmer, she edited *Writing Women in Late Imperial China* (1997), which gathered a number of papers presented at a 1993 Yale conference. Together with Haun Saussy, she edited a comprehensive anthology of women's poetry, *Women Writers of Traditional China: An Anthology of Poetry and Criticism* (1999). A later narrative anthology of women's literature by Wilt L. Idema and Beata Grant, *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China* (2004) is more restricted in the women authors selected but more expansive in its coverage of each author as the works selected are presented

in the context of original biographical and autobiographical materials; it also is more extensive in scope as it covers prose and drama by female authors, as well as “plucking rhymes” (*tanci*, long verse narratives, often featuring heroines cross-dressing as men).¹⁵

The extent of literary activities by Chinese elite women in the long seventeenth century and the long eighteenth century have been highlighted by, respectively, Dorothy Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Quarters: Women and Culture in Seventeenth-Century China* (1994), and Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in China's Long Eighteenth Century* (1997). As both authors are social historians by trade, however, they pay little attention to the literary works resulting from these activities. This applies even to Mann's most recent publication, *The Talented Women of the Zhang Family* (2007), in which she presents a highly imaginative and utterly fascinating reconstruction of the biographies of three women poets belonging to three different generations. A flurry of articles on various aspects of women's literature followed the publication of the pioneering works of Kang-i Sun-Chang, Dorothy Ko, and Susan Mann.

Building on their earlier research, some of the leading scholars of women's literature of the Ming and Qing dynasties have summarized part of their findings in monographs. Beata Grant, who has published widely on women and Buddhism, has published *Eminent Nuns: Women Chan Masters of Seventeenth-Century China* (2008), a collection of biographies of seventeenth-century Chan nuns on the basis of their preserved collected writings; each of these biographies is amply illustrated with translated excerpts from their prose and poetry. Grace Fong, in *Herself an Author: Gender, Agency, and Writing in Late Imperial China* (2008), mostly deals with female writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, dealing with autobiographical poems by women, poetry by concubines, travel records by women, and female-authored poetry criticism. Fong also has published on the enigmatic poetry of He Shuangqing, the female peasant poet only known to us from the pages of Shi Zhenlin's *Xiqing sanji*.¹⁶ The relation of women to vernacular fiction from the early nineteenth-century onward is the research topic of Ellen Widmer's *The Beauty and the Book: Women and Fiction in Nineteenth-Century China* (2006), which includes chapters on the *tanci* editor and author Hou Zhi, and on the Manchu poet Gu Chun, who is now known to be author of *Honglou meng ying*, a twenty-chapter sequel to *Honglou meng*.¹⁷

The late Qing nationalist and feminist Qiu Jin (1875–1907) was the subject of a major article by Mary Backus Rankin in 1975, “The Emergence of Women at the End of the Ch'ing: The Case of Ch'iu Chin,” in Margery Wolf and Roxane Witke, eds., *Women in Chinese Society* (1975). In more recent years both Lingzhen Wang and Yan Haiping included a chapter on Qiu Jin in, respectively, *Personal Matters: Women's Autobiographical Practice in Twentieth Century China* (2004) and *Chinese Women Writers and the Feminist Imagination, 1905–1948* (2006). Most recently Hu Ying has published a series of articles on Qiu Jin and her friends.

Popular Literature

The Ming and Qing dynasties have left us a rich legacy of popular songs and ballads. Of the collections of popular songs, Feng Menglong's *Shange* has attracted the most attention. Its bawdy songs in the Wu dialect are discussed in both Kathryn A. Lowry, *The Tapestry of Popular Songs in 16th- and 17th-Century China: Reading, Imitation, and Desire* (2005), and Hsu Pi-ching, *Beyond Eroticism: A Historian's Reading of Humor in Feng Menglong's Child's Folly* (2006).

Studies on the many genres of narrative ballads of the Ming and Qing are extremely rare. The Australian scholar Anne McLaren has devoted an exhaustive monograph to the “ballad stories” (*cibua*) from the Chinghua period, which were discovered in 1967 and reprinted in 1973, under the title *Chinese Popular Culture and Ming Chantefables* (1998). Gail Oman King translated the four-volume *cibua* on the life of Guan Yu’s son Hua Guan Suo as *The Story of Hua Guan Suo* (1989), and Wilt L. Idema has translated the eight texts on the youth of Judge Bao and some of his cases in his *Judge Bao and the Rule of Law: Eight Ballad-Stories from the Period 1250–1450* (2009). Idema’s *Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai: Four Versions of the Legend of the Butterfly-Lovers* (2010) contains one Ming dynasty chantefable, which shows great similarities to the ballad-stories of the Chinghua period, and one early Qing adaptation in five-line stanzas.

“Precious Scrolls” (*baojuan*) are a genre of prosimetric ballad that was popular throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties. While some precious scrolls consist of pious Buddhist tales without a clear sectarian coloring, other precious scrolls focus on the teachings of the new religions that emerged over the course of the Ming and Qing. It is this latter category that is studied by Daniel L. Overmeyer in his *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1999). One of the earliest narrative *baojuan*, the *Xiangshan baojuan* on the life of the princess of Miaoshan, has been translated by Wilt L. Idema in his *Filial Piety and Personal Salvation: Two Precious Scroll Narratives of Guanyin and Her Acolytes* (2008). He has also translated a nineteenth-century *baojuan* on the legend of Meng Jiangnü in his *Meng Jiangnü Brings Down the Great Wall: Ten Versions of a Chinese Legend* (2008). His translation of the nineteenth-century *Leifeng baojuan* on the legend of the White Snake is included in his *The White Snake and Her Son: A Translation of The Precious Scroll of Thunder Peak, with Related Texts* (2009).

In recent years the northern genre of *zidishu*, which was popular with the “sons and younger brothers of the Eight Banners,” has started to attract attention, but publications so far have only rarely gone beyond translations. Studies on the rewriting of prosimetric ballads as vernacular novels have resulted in the publication of some articles. The major study on *tanci*, Marc Bender, *Plum and Bamboo: China’s Suzhou Chantefable Tradition* (2003), is primarily focused on contemporary performance.

Conclusion

A survey of North American studies of Ming and Qing literature within the scope allowed by this volume cannot but be very selective, and therefore very unfair. It also has to be superficial, as space is lacking for a more detailed analysis of the individual contributions of each of the titles mentioned. The emphasis on monographs rather than articles also results in a skewed picture: many topics that have not led to monographs have been treated in articles, articles may at times be more incisive and original than books, and the contribution of younger scholars who so far only have published articles is not given due attention. For a full picture of the English-language sinological scholarship from North America one therefore also will have to consult the journals in the field. General journals such as the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, *Young Pao*, *Asia Major*, *Monumenta Serica*, and *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* all regularly publish articles concerning Ming and Qing dynasty literature. More specialized journals that have to be mentioned are *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*,

which covers all of Chinese literature; *Chinoperl*, which focuses on performance-related literature; *Late Imperial China*, which covers the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries; *Ming Studies*, which covers the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries; and *Nan Nü*, which publishes many articles on women's literature. The content of many of these journals is now available online, and their contents can easily be located through the *Bibliography of Asian Studies*, which is also available online. The *Tōyōgaku bunken ruimoku*, also available online, has the advantage that it includes book reviews in its coverage. But even these excellent bibliographies do not cover the research in dissertations, which will provide the basis for many if not most publications in the decade ahead.

Even if one could provide a full bibliographical overview of English-language research on Chinese literature of the Ming and Qing literature, it would only provide an increasingly incomplete picture of North American research. More and more scholars in Chinese literature working in North America publish in Chinese. This is only to be expected as publications on Chinese literature in Chinese can expect a much larger audience in the sinophone world than in the nonsinophone world. Over the course of the last three decades opportunities for publishing in Chinese have become more numerous every year, and more and more attractive, while opportunities for the traditional publishing of specialized academic monographs in English are rapidly dwindling. On top of that, there are some areas of research in which publication in Chinese simply is the most logical choice. For instance, Y. W. Ma, who initially published mostly in English when writing on the development of the legend of Judge Bao, increasingly came to publish in Chinese as his research interest shifted to the textual history of the *Shuihu zhuan*. One may add that more and more English-language publications on Chinese literature enjoy a second life in Chinese translation, and many of the publications mentioned in the paragraphs above have already been translated into Chinese too. While any meaningful research on Chinese literature outside China has to be conducted in constant dialogue with research on the same subject in the Chinese world itself, the increased publication of research on Chinese literature in Chinese runs the danger of diminishing the interaction between research on Chinese literature and fields of comparative and general literature (even though one has to admit that such interaction has never been as flourishing as scholars in Chinese literature might wish).

But even if one takes the Chinese-language publications emanating from North America into account, it is clear that this research has only scratched the surface of Ming and Qing literature. This is obvious, for instance, in the fields of drama, classical poetry and nonfiction prose, and popular literature, but even in the field of traditional vernacular fiction there are still many blind spots. Many of the major novels of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries have never received monographic treatment, and studies of the complete oeuvre of individual authors, such as Hanan's work on Li Yu, in which the different aspects of his work are considered in their interrelation, are still very rare. While recent years have seen the emergence of comparative and thematic studies, their number is still very small, and these studies often limit themselves to comparing only a very limited set of novels. While we have (or soon will have) excellent or at least serviceable translations of the major works of fiction, many other important and interesting novels and short story collections remain untranslated, which greatly hampers the possibility of teaching the subject in its full complexity in an undergraduate setting. In this respect it may be pointed out that our French colleagues would appear to be much more active when it comes to the translation of *huaben* and nonfiction prose.

It is probably a utopian desire to hope that all periods of Chinese literature can be studied equally well and in depth in North American academe. The available number of scholars is simply too limited, and the interests of scholars shift in reaction to fashion and opportunity. The many massive reprint projects of recent decades and the new electronic resources have made the texts of the majority of genres of traditional Chinese literature much more easily available, but, especially in the field of Ming and Qing literature, this also has resulted in a true explosion of primary materials to be considered, making research that much more daunting. On top of that, the secondary scholarship in Chinese is increasing at an exponential rate and now demands to be read because it is fully available on the Web. Any scholar interested in *Honglou meng* will hardly have time to read or reread that novel at all if he or she wants to keep abreast of the secondary scholarship on this novel, for even books on the history of *Hongxue* are now a growth industry! Recent years have seen the publication of numerous sets of surveys of twentieth-century scholarship on Chinese literature, but the total output of the twentieth century has in the meantime, I'm afraid, been dwarfed by the scholarly production of the first decades of the twenty-first century. One cannot blame young PhD students for feeling overwhelmed by the volume of materials to be considered. The number of students applying for admission to PhD programs who state they want to specialize in areas of premodern Chinese literature is considerably smaller than the number of students who intend to work on modern and contemporary literature and culture.

In earlier decades modern and contemporary Chinese literature and culture did not exert such an attraction on students. From the 1950s to the early 1980s of the twentieth century, the canon of modern literature was highly restrictive, while strict political control on both sides of the Taiwan Straits hampered the development of a vibrant contemporary culture. But that situation had changed by the 1980s. Students who spent in time in China or on Taiwan suddenly encountered a vibrant cultural scene. And when the archives were opened, the equally vibrant cultural scene of Republican China became accessible too. Moreover, the turn toward cultural studies in many departments of languages and literatures increasingly opened them up to the inclusion of visual materials, whether calendar posters and newspaper advertisements or movies and television dramas, in their teaching and research. It takes quite an exceptional teacher of premodern poetry or fiction to compete with courses offering a smorgasbord of visual delights to contemporary students who have grown up on a diet of videos and DVDs. In those schools where student enrollment is the primary criterion in assigning faculty, there is accordingly a strong pressure to switch positions from premodern literature to modern and contemporary studies. Rumor has it that one major private university has five faculty members teaching modern and contemporary Chinese literature and culture but none teaching premodern literature.

And so we may well be confronted with a situation in which facilities for the study of premodern Chinese literature are rapidly improving, and in which the total number of teachers of Chinese language and culture is increasing, but in which the faculty engaged in teaching and researching premodern Chinese literature is shrinking. This situation is, of course, not unique to Chinese studies but is shared by many other disciplines in the humanities.

Notes

Wilt L. Idema studied Chinese Language and Culture at Leiden University, from which he obtained his doctorate in 1974. Having taught at Leiden University from 1970 to 1999, he is currently Professor of Chinese Literature at Harvard University. He has published widely in the field of traditional Chinese fiction, drama, and popular ballads; he has also published in the field of Chinese women's literature. Some of his recent publications include *The Red Brush: Writing Women of Imperial China* (2004, with Beata Grant); *Meng Jiangnu Brings Down the Great Wall: Ten Versions of a Chinese Legend* (2008); *Personal Salvation and Filial Piety: Two Precious Scroll Narratives of Guanyin and Her Acolytes* (2008); and *Heroines of Jiangyong: Chinese Narrative Ballads in Women's Script* (2009).

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¹ For an excellent detailed survey of the English-language scholarship on traditional vernacular fiction up to 1994, see Robert Hegel, "Traditional Chinese Fiction: The State of the Art," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53 no. 2 (1994): 394–427. Winston L. Y. Yang, Peter Li, and Nathan K. Mao had earlier provided an annotated bibliography of Western studies on classical and vernacular fiction up to 1977 in their *Classical Chinese Fiction: A Guide to Its Study and Appreciation, Essays and Bibliographies* (1978).

² Patrick Hanan, "The Text of the *Chin P'ing Mei*," *Asia Major*, 2nd ser., 9 (1962): 1–52; "The Sources of the *Chin P'ing Mei*," *Asia Major*, 2nd ser., 10 (1963): 23–67.

³ On that *huaben*, see Huang Yongnian, "Ji Yuan ke *Xinbian Hong bai zhibi xiaoshuo canye*," *Zhongguo wenshi luncong* 21, no. 1 (1982): 99–110. The full and expanded text of the story is found in *Xingshi bengyan* 31.

⁴ On Li Yu as a playwright, see Eric P. Henry, *Chinese Amusement: The Lively Plays of Li Yu* (1980). Also see Chunshu Chang and Shelley Hsueh-lun Chang, *Crisis and Transformation in Seventeenth-Century China: Society, Culture, and Modernity in Li Yu's World* (1998).

⁵ As early as 1972 John C. Y. Wang had published his *Chin Sheng-t'an*, which contained separate chapters on Jin Shengtan's *Shuibu zhuan* and *Xixiangji* commentaries. Rolston would go on to write *Traditional Chinese Fiction and Fiction Commentary: Reading and Writing between the Lines* (1997), a survey history of traditional vernacular fiction in which he described the interaction between creation and criticism as an important element in its development.

⁶ Andrew Plaks's student Maram Epstein covered the major novels of the Qing dynasty in her *Competing Discourses: Orthodoxy, Authenticity, and Engendered Meaning in Late Imperial Chinese Fiction* (2001), which starts out with a chapter devoted to *qing* and continues with chapters on, respectively, *Xingshi yinyuan zhuan*, *Honglou meng*, *Yesou puyan*, *Jinghua yuan*, and *Ernü yingxiang zhuan*.

⁷ To meet the needs of teachers, Anthony Yu has also produced a shortened version: *The Monkey and the Monk: A Revised Abridgment of The Journey to the West* (2006).

⁸ On *Xingshi yinyuan zhuan*, also see Daria Berg, *Carnival in China: A Reading of the Xingshi Yinyuan Zhuan* (2002).

⁹ For a brief biography of its author, see Hsin-sheng C. Kao, *Li Ju-chen* (1981).

¹⁰ Chapters 21–26 had been translated by Lin Yutang in his *A Nun of Taishan (a Novellette) and Other Translations* (1936).

¹¹ On Pu Songling, also see Chang Chun-shu and Shelly Hsueh-lun Chang, *Redefining History: Ghosts, Spirits, and Human Society in P'u Sung-ling's World, 1640–1715* (1998).

¹² Kowallis also has published a complete translation of the classical poetry of Lu Xun, *The Lyrical Lu Xun: A Study of his Classical-Style Verse* (1995).

¹³ Also see Yang Ye trans., *Vignettes from the Late Ming: a Hsiao-p' in anthology* (1999).

¹⁴ For a more detailed survey of English-language studies on Chinese women's literature, see Yi Weide [Wilt L. Idema], "Ying Mei xuejie dui lidai Zhongguo nüxing zuojia de yanjiu," *Writing Women of Dynastic China: A Survey of English-Language Scholarship*, in Fang Xiujie [Grace Fong] and Yi Weide [Wilt L. Idema], eds., *Meiguo Hafo daxue Hafo Yanjing tushuguan cang Ming Qing funü zhubu buikan*, *Writings by Women of the Ming and Qing Dynasties in the Harvard-Yenching Library of the Harvard University Library, USA*, vol. 1. Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 2009, 20–48.

¹⁵ So far the only monograph devoted to a female-authored *tanci* is Martina H. Sung, *The Narrative Art of Tsai-sheng-yüan: A Feminist Vision in Traditional Chinese Society* (1994).

¹⁶ Grace Fong, "De/Constructing a Feminine Ideal in the Eighteenth Century: *Random Records of West-Green* and the Story of Shuangqing," in *Writing Women in Late Imperial China*, ed. Ellen Widmer and Kang-i Sun Chang (1997), 264–81. He Shangqing has inspired two books, one by Elsie Choi, *Leaves of Prayer: The Life and Poetry of He Shuangqing, a Farmwife in Eighteenth-Century China* (1993), and one by Paul Ropp, *Banished Immortal: Searching for China's Peasant Woman Poet* (2001).

¹⁷ Another monograph that should be mentioned is Liuxi [Louis] Meng, *Poetry as Power: Yuan Mei's Female Disciple Qu Bingyun (1767–1810)* (2007).

US Scholarship on Modern Chinese Literature

Edward M. Gunn

Early Research Methods and Topics

The first book-length study of twentieth-century Chinese literature in the United States is *A History of Modern Chinese Fiction, 1917–1957*, by the Yale University–educated Hsia Chih-tsing (C. T. Hsia, Xia Zhiqing), published in 1961, after the abatement of the worst hostilities in Korea. Professor Hsia's aim was to attract readers to modern Chinese literature by employing the methods and concepts that had dominated the evaluation of literary texts at that time. At the same time, however, the dominant school of criticism that he made use of, New Criticism, was losing its position. As described in one article in a 1959 issue of the journal *Comparative Literature*, “The era of New Criticism, everyone agrees, is over.” New Criticism valued close readings of texts to determine their achievements in bringing what were judged to be irreconcilable tensions or contradictions fundamental to human existence into a unified form. “The ancillary disciplines that the New Criticism mainly employed were not historical and humanistic studies, such as philosophy or aesthetics, but nascent sciences, such as anthropology and psychoanalysis” (Raleigh 22). This vision of a contest between grounding literary scholarship in psychoanalysis and anthropology or history and philosophy is helpful to understanding both the controversies at the time of Hsia's *History* and aspects of the fields of literary scholarship down to the present.

Hsia's *History* was challenged by a leading European scholar, Jaroslav Prusek, who decried Hsia's failure to give adequate credit to Chinese authors for their contributions to socialist revolution. As a historical materialist in a socialist nation, Czechoslovakia, Prusek's vision of history and the place of literature in it was certainly at odds with the school of New Criticism. It is tempting to imagine Professor Hsia during this Cold War era, like the New Critics, “regarding modern history as a series of losses [of past cultural achievements] . . . and themselves as the preservers or restorers of these missing heritages” (Raleigh 25). Certainly, Hsia's evaluation of writers carries with it a vision of humanity consistent with psychoanalysis: “[P]reoccupation with social reform and political propaganda has incapacitated them from rendering the truth of things in all its complexity” (Hsia C. T. 1963 432). More explicitly, Hsia asked, “How can one maintain a sharply expressed viewpoint and a definite position in the social struggle if one opens the gates to the unconscious and lets one's dark and invariably subversive dreams, desires, and fears impede the full articulation of one's conscious, enlightened will?” (440).

C. T. Hsia's critical evaluation of individual authors generated a considerable amount of research by younger scholars, both following his lead and differing with his judgment. In an anthology of fiction that he edited a decade later with Joseph S. M. Lau (Liu Shaoming), Hsia included translations

of work by Yu Dafu, Zhang Tianyi, Wu Zuxiang, Shen Congwen, and Zhang Ailing, each of whom had produced short fiction that Hsia had recommended in his *History*, while also adding three younger writers from Taiwan (Bai Xianyong, Nie Hualing, and Shui Jing). Shortly thereafter another anthology of Republican era literature appeared, edited by Harold Isaacs (Isaacs 1974), with important examples of early leftist writers. Subsequently, two younger scholars, Joseph Lau and Leo Ou-fan Lee, collaborated with C. T. Hsia to publish a much expanded anthology of fiction (Lau, Hsia, and Lee 1981), this time including important novellas by Mao Dun and others whom Hsia had not previously published but had discussed in positive terms. Howard Goldblatt also began a long, distinguished career as the most prolific translator of modern Chinese fiction, first with the short stories of Chen Ruoxi (1978) and the novellas of Xiao Hong (1979). Eventually the writers whose works Goldblatt translated extended from Li Ang to Wang Shuo, Mo Yan, Jia Pingwa, Su Tong, Jiang Rong, Chun Shu, and others, among them Zhu Tianwen and Alai, for which he collaborated with Sylvia Li-chun Lin.

Where C. T. Hsia had been reluctant to credit Lu Xun with being the foremost writer of twentieth-century China, two other scholars devoted years to writing careful studies (Lyell 1976; Lee 1987). After the first journal devoted to modern Chinese literature was established, *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, its bibliographic section had to include a separate section to list studies devoted to Lu Xun <http://mclc.osu.edu/rc/lxbib.htm>. Joe C. Huang (Huang 1973) sought to displace Hsia's disappointment with Maoist era fiction by writing patient studies of the best-known socialist novels of the 1950s and 1960s. Hsia expressed his regret that in the first edition of *History* he had not given sufficient attention to the women authors Ding Ling and Xiao Hong. However, book-length studies of these two writers appeared that Hsia encouraged. A number of these studies of individual authors were initiated as research in social history rather than critical evaluation. Olga Lang's pioneering study, for example, emphasized Ba Jin's concern with youth and anarchism, so that fiction admired by C. T. Hsia and others, such as *Cold Nights* (*Han ye* 寒夜), received little attention. Ranbir Vohra's study of Lao She (Vohra 1974) "traces the development of his political consciousness and convictions," and his treatment of an important novel like *Camel Xiangzi* (*Luotuo Xiangzi*) was not intended to develop the critical insights of C. T. Hsia's *History* or the formalist study of Lao She's work by Zbigniew Slupski in Europe. The study of social history through literature was partly a function of the way Chinese studies at Harvard University were structured at that time and partly the inspiration of other scholars.

By the 1980s, studies of individual writers showed two notable new features. The first was the remarkable development of empirical detail on account of scholars' access to people, places, and texts within the People's Republic. This feature is exemplified in the account of Shen Congwen's life and creative career by Jeffrey Kinkley (Kinkley 1987). Compared to his own dissertation on Shen Congwen, completed in 1977 when there was scant access to mainland China, or to a previous study by the distinguished writer Nieh Hua-ling (Nieh 1972), the volume of biographical and textual detail in Kinkley's published research constituted an unprecedented monument to a modern Chinese writer's life and achievements. A second feature was integrating recent theory into the study of an individual writer's creative career, as shown in Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker's 1979 dissertation in comparative literature, which was published as *Ding Ling's Fiction: Ideology and Narrative in Modern Chinese Literature*. Feuerwerker explored theories introduced by Roland Barthes, Clifford Geertz, and Fredric Jameson to construct a concept of ideology, sometimes unconsciously held and sometimes consciously adopted, and how

a writer at times works without apparent conflict within its limitations and sometimes strains against them. Although book-length studies of individual authors have declined to near extinction, shorter biographical and critical studies as entries in reference books have increased dramatically, exemplified by the meticulously researched entries for over thirty Republican era writers in Moran 2007.

The work of C. T. Hsia's older brother, T. A. Hsia (Xia Ji'an), and the Czech scholar Jaroslav Prusek generated some of the most important studies of the 1970s. During the 1960s T. A. Hsia published a number of articles intended as material for a study of left-wing writers of the Republican era, but he died before his project was complete. The articles were collected and published as a book posthumously (Hsia, T. A. 1968). Hsia offered eloquent literary criticism but also compassionate explorations of turmoil in and around the writing and lives of Lu Xun, Jiang Guangci, Qu Qiubai, and Communist writers martyred in Shanghai in 1930. Hsia sought to understand the tensions within and among writers, whether profound (Lu Xun) or immature (Jiang Guangci), and reveal their experiences as more complex than the sheer record of their revolutionary activities and writing could. Hence, T. A. Hsia's study of an identifiable group of writers and the insights a study could offer into both them and their social milieu offered a model for younger scholars, such as the Harvard-trained historians Merle Goldman, Leo Ou-fan Lee, and Perry Link. Goldman's study of literary dissent in the People's Republic during the 1950s (Goldman 1967) focused almost entirely on the documentary record of writers as intellectuals charged with violating literary policies rather than characterizing their literary texts as such. Lee's study of "the romantic generation of Chinese writers" emulated T. A. Hsia's sympathetic yet critical exploration. At the same time, Lee's inspiration for conceiving a "romantic generation" spanning the decades from Su Manshu to Guo Moruo and Yu Dafu to Xiao Jun derived from what he acknowledged as Jaroslav's Prusek's "pioneering research on the subjective tendencies in modern Chinese literature that led me to my thesis" (1973 xi–xii). If Lee defined a group of writers by their valorizing their emotions, Perry Link explored the commercially popular writers that their detractors had already labeled the "Mandarin Duck and Butterfly" School. Link's goal was cultural in the sense of defining the psyche of a social population: "[T]hat there has to be some important connection between an especially popular work and the psychology of its audience is, I feel, beyond serious doubt" (Link 1981 7) Link analyzed not only such key texts as Xu Zhenya's *Jade Pear Spirit* (1912) and Zhang Henshui's *Fate in Tears and Laughter* (192?) but also popular literature as an institution, from the development of a popular, commercial press to the attitudes of the cultural elite and the largely urban readership. Both Lee and Link were concerned as well with what legacy might exist in later decades, so that Lee's study of romantics concluded with reflections on their response to both their Chinese heritage and foreign sources in Goethe, Romain Rolland, and Byron, and on the call of "revolutionary romanticism" at the time Lee wrote in the early 1970s. By the time Link was completing his study of popular commercial literature, he could reflect on the return of a popular market for fiction in 1979. This model for exploring a historically defined set of writers also generated interest among scholars in the field of literature itself, so that C. T. Hsia strongly encouraged Edward Gunn to complete and publish a study of Chinese literature in Japanese-occupied Shanghai and Beijing during the War of Resistance to Japan in 1937–45 (Gunn 1980). The starting point for this study was studies of individual writers such as Zhou Zuoren and C. T. Hsia's own admirable introductions to the fiction of Zhang Ailing, Qian Zhongshu, Shi Tuo, and others. Poshek Fu (1993) would later draw on

this topic to expand greatly the exploration of the moral ambiguity of intellectual choices under the Japanese occupation. However, Gunn's research on the very lively world of spoken drama attracted the attention of other scholars, so that Joseph S. M. Lau and Leo Ou-fan Lee encouraged Gunn to edit an anthology of Chinese drama (Gunn 1983). Other US-based writers and scholars had assembled anthologies of Maoist era theatrical productions, especially the “*geming yangban xi*” revolutionary model operas of the Cultural Revolution era (Meserve 1970; Snow 1972; Ebon 1975).

Based on his dissertation, Lau had completed the first book-length study of the dramas of Cao Yu (Lau 1970). His concern was to introduce Chinese spoken drama as it was informed by the standards of Western drama in response to China's own social predicaments. Gunn's anthology sought to recognize key texts while introducing lesser-known or unknown texts as well. During the 1980s, as curiosity about Chinese literature expanded in the United States, other US-based scholars published book-length studies of contemporary Chinese theater and drama, especially collections of articles, such as McDougall 1984 and Tung 1987. What distinguished these collections was the interdisciplinary range of the studies. Whereas Gunn had a background in dramatic literature and theater, he had no training in ethnomusicology; the handful of US-based scholars in ethnomusicology and theater arts with any special knowledge of Chinese opera had previously had only very limited access to mainland Chinese opera. Now scholars of different disciplines with greater access to sources were brought together from ethnomusicology, comparative literature, Chinese literature, and history. In addition, contributors from the fields of literature were displaying increasing use of recent theory, such as Kirk Denton's use of semiotics to analyze the model opera *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy* (Tung 1987 119–36) and Ted Hutner's close examination of the role of Chinese literary criticism itself in shaping literature (MacDougall 1984 54–80). Eventually Gunn's anthology was updated and replaced with an expanded collection of plays (Chen Xiaomei 2010).

For a number of scholars, fiction lent itself to the kind of social history and social science that dominated and still dominates the study of China and Chinese literature. Perry Link's research had begun with fiction, but during the 1980s and 1990s he broadened his published research to include introductions and translations of works of every genre, and his thoroughly informed research on literature and entertainment as social institutions later culminated in a study of literature and entertainment in the late 1970s and 1980s (Link 2000). This study offered some of the best insights into publication and circulation, censorship, and audiences in China at that time. In the 1960s C. T. Hsia was attempting to persuade a US audience outside the fields of China studies to take an interest in modern Chinese fiction. But the insistent subjectivity and obscurity of modern Chinese poetry has only occasionally supported these studies, so that US readers of Chinese literature were more accustomed to the admiration of Chinese for their classical poetry and almost none could appreciate the challenge that modern Chinese poetry faced or that providing translations of it confronted. Yet soon after C. T. Hsia's *History*, Hsu Kai-yu (Xu Jieyu) completed the first major anthology of modern Chinese poetry in English translation (Hsu 1963), inaugurating a series of works devoted to modern poetry. Among Hsu's concerns was his identification with his US-educated mentor in the 1940s, the late distinguished poet Wen Yiduo. Hsu's translations were in flawless English, with many verses represented in comparable English-language verse forms, yet readers always found problems. His anthology had a remarkable lifespan and was reprinted in several editions. His erudite introductions to

each group or school of poets stopped before they provided close readings or extended biographical information. The gaps were filled by a series of books that followed. In 1970 Wai-lim Yip (Ye Weilian) provided an anthology of verse from Taiwan, which Hsu had excluded from his collection. Angela Jung Palandri in turn published a collection of poems from Taiwan that retranslated a few poems and introduced poets that Yip had neglected, especially older poets (Palandri 1972). Besides expanding the range of poets represented, the retranslations of some poems provided an excellent opportunity to study practical issues of translation. Julia C. Lin published the first book-length critical study, with biographical introductions and close readings. Following Hsu, she selected eleven of the poets he had translated between 1920 and 1937 and three from 1937 to 1969 (Lin 1972). Whereas Hsu's anthology organized groups of poets according to the terms for the various forms of Western poetry that had inspired their work, Lin's analysis stressed the abiding allusions to classical Chinese poetry embedded in the modern verses. Lin retranslated a number of poems offered by Hsu or appearing in publications of the Foreign Languages Press in Beijing, again providing an opportunity to address practical issues of translation as interpretation. Another excellent example of retranslation is the set of poems by Mao Zedong, already available through the Foreign Languages Press in Beijing, retranslated by Cyril Birch, which appeared in the classical poetry anthology *Sunflower Splendor* (Liu and Lo 1975).

In 1979 Hsü Kai-yu edited a large anthology of translations, *The Literature of the People's Republic of China* (Hsü Kai-yu 1979), which included a significant selection of poetry, as well as fiction and drama of the Maoist era. But, apart from short studies and scattered translations, systematic studies of modern Chinese nonfiction prose were not published—as they were outside the United States—until after 2000. Charles Laughlin later published two books, the first on Chinese reportage literature up to the 1960s (Laughlin 2002) and the second on the familiar essay in the Republican era (Laughlin 2008).

Literary and Cultural Theory

From C. T. Hsia's *History* on, the overwhelming focus in the study of fiction was realism. At the level of empirical research there were subsequent innovative studies, such as Chen Yu-shih's inspired detection of Mao Dun's early novels that indicate he structured his realist depiction of characters and action to suggest an allegory of issues and events within the Communist Party around 1927–28 (Chen Yu-shih 1986). During the 1980s younger scholars entering the field of modern Chinese literature absorbed innovative critical discourse in the field of literature and applied it to modern Chinese realist fiction. Two major examples of these studies were books by Marston Anderson (Anderson 1990) and David Der-wei Wang (Wang 1992). Anderson traced the development of realism by arguing that Lu Xun's short stories constituted a paradigm for realism in the revolutionary period 1919–37. The theoretical aim among Chinese reformers and revolutionaries was to use realism as an objective, scientific means to cultivate ethical commitment. However, Lu Xun's writing indicates he was aware that “representational art risks making the victim [among characters in a story] into a mere object of the reader's curiosity or pity; in the process of reading, these emotions, which significantly are those of the observer, are satisfied, thereby camouflaging the true nature of the reader's involvement with the victim,” which is purging feelings of pity, not cultivating social commitment (Anderson 86). It was

the writers' growing awareness of this situation, rather than the dictates of Mao Zedong in Yan'an in 1942, that led them to adopt a collective protagonist as the focus of fiction: "The reader must identify directly with the crowd as an entity in itself, as one identifies with an individual character in other kinds of fiction. . . . The crowd's discontent is none other than the familiar social critique of the intellectuals, but that critique has now found a new origin and a new authority: it is no longer the property of the narrator or intellectual protagonist but is diffused democratically throughout the crowd" (Anderson 185–87). It is this historical process within fiction that led to Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" and to writers adopting socialist realism. David Der-wei Wang, however, argued that there were multiple versions of realism, and that Lu Xun's fiction created a starting point rather than a paradigm for realist writers of the Republican era: "The limits reached by Lu Xun's realism are also the limits of realism for some subsequent writers, but are the boundaries where the realisms of Mao Dun, Lao She, and Shen Congwen begin" (Wang 1992 2). Rather, what characterized various forms of realism "was an allegorical subtext that reveals the tension between what the real should be and what the real is" (Wang 1992 4). Wang then employs methods of the theorists Roland Barthes and especially Mikhail Bakhtin to demonstrate that representative texts by Mao Dun, Lao She, and Shen Congwen are sites of different, heterogeneous voices in tension with each other. These writers "opened the polychrome horizon of modern Chinese realist fiction" through novels of tensions as political/historical, melodramatic/farcical, and lyrical/nativist (Wang 1992 291). Their legacy very much informed the realism of post-Mao fiction on the mainland of China and in Taiwan, from Feng Jikai, A. Cheng, Han Shaogong and Yu Hua to Wang Wenxing, Wang Zhenhe, Li Yongping, and others.

The critical methods used in all these studies remained those of literary theory. However, already in the mid-1980s cultural studies and film studies had begun to make their mark in the field of Chinese literature. Both of these new fields posed significant opportunities and challenges for the study of modern Chinese literature. One of the legacies of C. T. Hsia's *History* is an essay appended to the second edition (Hsia 1971), "Obsession with China," in which he expressed his frustration with so many Chinese writers. Unlike Western writers, who identify their societies with "the state of man in the modern world, the Chinese writer sees the condition of China as peculiarly Chinese and not applicable elsewhere" (536). Few have ever challenged this major statement, but more have attacked his dismay. As a humanist who devoted his intellect to building recognition of China in a universal framework, Hsia articulated a concern with the "obsession with China" that has been shared by scholars in various disciplines from history to political science. But it is precisely his desire for Chinese intellectuals to abandon this sense of difference that is challenged by cultural studies and its insistence on difference through gender, class, and ethnicity as variously emphasized by feminism, the Marxist theory of postmodernism, and postcolonial studies. Among these theories the vision of a shared humanity as understood through Western thought conceals the differences of the global modern world, responding to empire and colonialism, white male domination, rational discourse that conceals imperial power as it represses alternative thought, the uneven spatialization of knowledge this power creates, and the circulation of ideas between a center (the West) and its periphery (the East).

Postmodernism and Postcolonial Studies

The first intervention in the study of Chinese literature came from Fredric Jameson, a theorist in comparative literature, in 1984 in the recently inaugurated journal *Modern Chinese Literature* (later renamed *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, MCLC). Jameson at that time was also introducing his theory of postmodernism in the journal *New Left Review* (Jameson 1984a). There he argued that in recent decades advanced capitalist nations had absorbed the defiance of modernism toward these societies and transformed the meaning and social function of that art into mass consumption of works that erased their hermeneutic appeal to a deeper vision of existence, their sense of history as a grand narrative, any coherent sense of space, and any meaningful intensity of purpose or feeling (“the death of the human as a subject” 主体). In the journal *Modern Chinese Literature* Jameson wrote a commentary on articles by Chinese literature scholars in which, based on their discussion, he proposed that the realism of Lao She, the modernism of Wang Meng, and what he introduced as the postmodernism of the Taiwan scholar-author Wang Wenxing illustrated the movement of modern history into postmodernism and the cultural response to it (Jameson 1984b).

Subsequently, in 1986, Jameson extended his discussion of modern Chinese literature by citing the fiction of Lu Xun as an example of a third-world culture that, like its economy, was “locked in a life and death struggle with first-world cultural imperialism” and suggested that texts of third-world literature inevitably were “national allegories” of this struggle (Jameson 1986 68–69).

The young scholar Rey Chow (Zhou Lei) challenged Jameson’s reading and theory: “The issues of ‘modernity’ and ‘modernism’ in Chinese literature, however, have to be rethought precisely because they are inextricably bound up with imperialism. Could ‘modern’ here be strictly the ‘new’? . . . Could ‘modernity’ in China be in fact a depletion of the usefulness of forms both ‘old’ and ‘new,’ because the old have lost their original relevance and the new have been applied from without?” (Chow 1986–87 73). In more specific terms Chow argued that May Fourth modern literature had to compete with Mandarin Duck and Butterfly literature. The latter used Confucian attitudes toward female virtue to write love stories as an excess of extreme sentiment and social entrapment. Mandarin Duck and Butterfly literature thus subverted Confucian culture by feminizing it and subverted modernization by fragmenting its grand narrative of historical development. In this sense it functioned as postmodern literature, but not according to Jameson’s historical scheme.

Theoretically, Chow introduced the shift from critical discourse about the “third world” employing a Marxist materialist conception of ideology and cultural production to postcolonial studies that were solely about ideology or the realm of discourse. In her response to Jameson, Chow introduced a staple feature of her critical method, the use of feminist thought to conceptualize China and the study of China as defined through its experience of Western colonialism. As she explained in her first book, *Woman and Chinese Modernity*, “As a means of formal analysis, ‘woman’ deals not only with gender but also with the power-invested processes of hierarchization and marginalization that are involved in the readings of culture” (Chow 1991 52). Her criticism targeted postcolonial thought for feminizing China, Chinese modernity for feminizing tradition as weak and passive, the “hegemonic status of western theoretical thinking” for its Eurocentrism, sinology for giving precedence to traditional China and excluding Western theory, cultural production about and by China for its patriarchal discourse,

and its vision of Chinese tradition for excluding Western-educated Hong Kong Chinese like her as “ethnically impure.” This scathing critique was presented through readings of Bernardo Bertolucci’s film *The Last Emperor*, Mandarin Duck and Butterfly literature, and Republican era fiction by women authors.

Both Jameson and Chow contributed to research on film. Jameson used the Taiwan film *The Terrorizer* (*Kongbu fenzhi*, 1987), directed by Yang Dechang, to do a reading of a postmodern work. The modernist work removed the order of human experience from social class issues to a world of arbitrary chance in which the individual was endowed with the capacity to determine meaning as a subject. The postmodern world of films like *The Terrorizer* reveals that “subject” 主体 to be a fictive product of text 文本 in which moral judgments no longer have a basis. All forms of art and media in the film are depictions of fragmentation rather than insights into the totality of the social or individual condition. The national allegory of the narrative is played out in a set of spaces rather than a clear temporal order: the characters live constricted lives in spaces defined by tradition and national, international, and transnational origins (Jameson 1994).

Rey Chow’s second book, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*, turned her feminist postcolonial studies project toward visual studies, inspired by feminist film theory. As a critique and alternative to postmodern theory, Chow argued, “feminists always begin, as the non-Western world must begin, with the legacy of the constellation of modernism *and* something more. While for the non-Western world that something is imperialism, for feminists it is patriarchy” (Chow 1993 59). By the time she wrote her third book, *Primitive Passions: Visuality, Sexuality, Ethnography, and Contemporary Chinese Cinema*, Chow was reviewing the claims that Zhang Yimou and other Chinese film directors were purveying exoticized images of Chinese to please Western audiences. In support of her defense of these films, she argued for reinventing the field of ethnography by beginning with its fundamentally visual nature. Chow introduced her argument with the famous feminist critique of film by Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.”

Because in our culture, looking and being looked at are commonly assigned respectively to men and women, vision bears the origins of gender inequality. Supplementing Mulvey’s argument with the anthropological situation, we may argue, in parallel, that vision bears the origins of ethnographic inequality. But we must go one step further: the state of being looked at not only is built into the way non-Western cultures are viewed by Western ones; more significantly it is part of the active manner in which such cultures represent—ethnographize—themselves. (Chow 1995 180)

Chow proceeded to borrow from philosophy, arguing that since translation can be seen as a “liberation” of the source text rather than a betrayal of it, so, too, cultural translation of ethnographic conceptions, as in the films of Zhang Yimou, may also be a liberation from their original sources rather than a betrayal of the culture. Chow’s work in visual studies continued in *Sentimental Fabulations, Contemporary Chinese Films: Attachment in the Age of Global Visibility*, this time exploring how films reveal ordinary intimate relationships among families or between lovers to argue that an identity such as “Chineseness” is not fixed, and that the attempts of political authorities or foreign-based scholars to insist on an ideal Chinese identity may be destructive (Chow 2007). Ultimately, Chow was as concerned with theory as

a means of intervening in others' theories as with consistently following or constructing a particular theory.

Feminism and Gender Studies

At the time Fredric Jameson and Rey Chow initiated their criticism in the 1980s, other students of Chinese literature had begun scholarship on feminism and gender, film and media studies, and postcolonial studies. The foundation for feminist and gender studies in literature was laid down in largely humanist terms by scholars in the 1970s and early 1980s. A committed humanist scholar such as C. T. Hsia had recognized the value of fiction by Zhang Ailing, and later by Ding Ling and Xiao Hong, and encouraged work on them. However, the early writings of Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker on women writers of the 1920s and 1930s and on Ding Ling's full career shows her relative indifference to the standards that C. T. Hsia advocated.

What is remarkable about the women writers of the late 1920's and early 1930's is not their modest literary achievement under the difficult circumstances of cultural transition, but what they managed to convey, through their unpracticed art, of their own condition. They showed that the cultural revolution of May Fourth . . . was for women yet another betrayal. It held out promises of easy solutions, illusions that women, in human and artistic terms, could quickly come into their own. These illusions turned out to be false. . . . Freedom from an authoritarian tradition mainly enabled women to get closer to, become more aware of, the basic, inescapable contradictions of their existence. . . . They were just beginning to grope toward the idea that the liberation of all human beings through total social revolution might be the precondition of their personal liberation. (Feuerwerker 1975 167)

In addition to monographs on individual women authors (Feuerwerker 1982; Goldblatt 1976), Angela Jung Palandri edited the first small volume of essays devoted exclusively to women writers, the Republican era writers Bing Xin, Ling Shuhua, Ding Ling, and Zhang Ailing and the Taiwan poet Yongzi (Wang Rongshi). Among the contributors, the historian Tani Barlow argued explicitly for recognizing Ding Ling as a feminist.

In 1988 Barlow edited a special issue of the journal *Modern Chinese Literature* devoted entirely to women writers in which several articles argued that women's liberation, feminism, and women's literature had been used historically to serve male-dominated agendas. Whereas Feuerwerker had implied a necessary connection between social revolution and feminism, the newer, posthumanist discourse did not, and the emphasis shifted from authoritarian to patriarchal power. Reedited material from this journal appeared in book form (Barlow 1993). In 1991 Barlow fully articulated her posthumanist position: as *funü*, persons were defined through kinship relations (*jiating*) as responsible for childbirth and child care; as *nüxing*, women were defined by sexual difference. Although radical reformers promoted the concept of *nüxing*, the interests of a patriarchal state (*guojia*) suppressed or erased difference (Barlow 1991). Tani Barlow's work followed that of Monique Wittig, who argued that the categorizing of bodies as identity is a product of a cultural-hegemonic conceptual scheme, an idea derived from the philosopher Michel Foucault. Barlow's own research as a historian has nevertheless continued to devote major attention to Ding Ling and other women writers and critics, including a

translation of Ding Ling's controversial writing that led to charges against her in 1957 (Barlow and Bjorge 1989) and a fully formulated feminist study extending her earlier scholarship (Barlow 2004) in which Barlow also discussed the work of the contemporary Chinese feminist critics Li Xiaojiang and Dai Jinhua.

Other scholars dealing with literary feminism developed or responded to the early work of Feuerwerker and Barlow. Wendy Larson returned to the issue of the "inescapable contradictions" alluded to in Feuerwerker's first study of women writers of the 1920s and 1930s, this time pointing out the continuity of that era with the traditional heritage of cultural values for men and women. When traditional concepts of virtue for women, emphasizing physical sacrifice, encountered the modern call for women to take on the male virtues of talent in writing and strong bodies, transgressing the domain of male virtues was justified through arguing that females could serve their families and nation better. However, the texts of women writers reveal their serious discomfort with their difficult situation, largely writing fictionalized autobiography with characters suffering from physical illness and frailty (Larson 1998). Liu Jianmei followed up the issues of how bodies have been depicted as issues of gender, this time among both female and male writers on the popular theme "love plus revolution," beginning where Larson left off in the 1930s and taking the topic into contemporary Chinese fiction (Liu 2003).

Reacting to the growing trend of posthumanist feminism to separate feminism in the 1920s and 1930s from the political revolution, Yan Haiping wrote a detailed biographical and literary analysis of several women writers to demonstrate the strong connection between women's concerns and their writing and revolutionary action from Qiu Jin at the end of the Qing dynasty to Ding Ling and Wang Ying in the 1940s (Yan 2006). The research by scholars, whether committed to feminism or not, has made Ding Ling the most studied author in US scholarship next to Lu Xun, as much for the importance of her biography as for her writing, as in the two-volume biography (Alber 2002, 2004), and has led to a teaching and study guide proposed by Amy Dooling, edited by Amy Dooling, under the sponsorship of the Modern Language Association (forthcoming). Amy Dooling's research produced the first feminist critical survey of modern Chinese women writers (Dooling 2005a) and two anthologies of writing in all genres from the early twentieth century to 1976 (Dooling and Torgeson 1998; Dooling 2005b). One of Dooling's critical concerns has been to read the ways in which women writers not typically identified with feminist positions have written feminist issues into their texts. Hence, for example, when Gunn (1980) introduced the spoken dramas of Yang Jiang in the 1940s, although he wrote admiringly of both her comedies and her tragedy, he selected her tragedy for translation (Gunn 1983). Dooling, however, noted that the irony of her comedies served feminist themes as well or better than her tragedy and chose a comedy for translation. Feminist and gender studies also generated studies of women's same-sex intimacy, whether lesbian or not. Patricia Sieber edited and wrote a critical introduction for the first anthology of same-sex intimacy among women, offering contemporary fiction in the 1980s and 1990s from mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong (Sieber 2001). Sang Tze-lan published the first book-length study of theories and texts of female homoerotic relationships, covering the history of these from the late Qing dynasty through the 1990s (Sang 2003). Gender studies also resulted in published research on issues among males, among them Zhong Xueping's exploration of concepts of masculinity in literature and film from the reform era

of the 1980s, when intellectuals claimed special status, into the 1990s, when the impact of global popular culture also brought change. Zhong's feminist psychoanalytic approach framed depictions of masculinity in terms of the issue that females in literature after the Cultural Revolution appeared to be stronger than men (Zhong 2000).

The effect of feminism on scholarship was sweeping. The canon of modern literature and the criteria for such a canon, whether as conceived by C. T. Hsia or Jaroslav Prusek, were altered. Methodologies such as psychoanalysis were altered from Freudian to Lacanian with a strongly gendered critique. Among genres, autobiography took on a new significance. For example, Wendy Larson studied the premodern and modern history of autobiography in order to determine how writers justified the value of their writing, not to explore other features of autobiography or its literary value. She found that in premodern times a form of autobiography in which the author distanced himself from a socially defined role played an important role in "establishing belles lettres in an oppositional relationship against history and officialdom" that valued literature for its relation to society (Larson 1991 29). Turning to the 1920s and 1930s, Larson argued that with the value of literature in itself questioned as the discourses of science and material production strengthened, the autobiography of "the disengaged literatus who had rejected position and social role" (47) was itself rejected in turn, and writers professed disdain for their autobiographical texts and the wish to be seen as actively engaged in materially altering society. This view of the narrowness of autobiography was acknowledged in Feuerwerker's studies (Feuerwerker 1975. 1982) However, writing as an explicitly feminist scholar in a later decade, Wang Lingzhen argued for the importance of modern women's autobiographical writing as restoring an intimacy to literature that was otherwise suppressed both in literature and in society in order to erase women's identities in favor of other, dominant discourses. In a broad survey of women's autobiographies from the late Qing dynasty to the 1990s, Wang Lingzhen engaged the classic psychoanalysis of Freud and Lacan and feminist appropriations and revisions of these theorists to show the value of how women's autobiographies depicted identity formation in the 1920s and 1930s. She then argued that contemporary women writers before the 1990s had used their personal writing to "put on a masquerade of universality, in order to challenge the dominant moral discourse" (Wang Lingzhen 2004 163). Feuerwerker herself outlined the way Chinese male writers traditionally used representations of females to depict the writers' own subjectivity and drew a strong connection between this and the ways in which four generations of twentieth-century writers have depicted peasants (Feuerwerker 1998).

Postcolonial Studies

Postcolonial studies have often been equally engaged in revising previous studies. Among the most noted early advocates of a postcolonial approach is Lydia Liu (Liu He) in her study *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937*. "Translingual" in this case may also be termed "cultural translation," referring to the entire range of cultural vision that accompanies the movement of signs from one culture to another, and that culture's invention of equivalent signs: "When knowledge passes from the guest language to the host language, it inevitably takes on new meanings in its new historicolinguistic environment; the translation remains connected with the

original idea as no more, and perhaps no less, than a trope of equivalence” (Lydia Liu 1995 60). Several years before Liu’s study, Edward Gunn published a study of changes in the grammar, rhetoric, and sentence cohesion of modern Chinese writing during the twentieth century, both from translations of foreign texts and from adoption of regional or local Chinese languages (*fangyan*, “dialects”) (Gunn 1991). Gunn showed examples of changes in all these aspects of writing. For example, the use of 她 for the feminine third-person pronoun, 他 for the masculine third-person pronoun, and 它 or 牠 for a nonhuman object led to groups of sentences using these in ways in which pronouns were never used before. New rhetorical features appeared that also allowed for translations in ways not used before. Although new grammar also appeared, almost no new grammar from translations of foreign texts became compelling rule changes for Chinese language. That is, Chinese language made maximum use of its existing rules to expand the number of grammatical innovations, but it did not fundamentally alter any rules or deep structure. Lydia Liu, however, focused on vocabulary used to translate foreign texts. Vocabulary historically changes and shifts far more rapidly than grammar, and Liu argued for an understanding of the power involved in both the introduction of Western vocabulary as a cultural sign of Western colonial power and in the ways in which this vocabulary was translated and understood as reflecting contests of power within Chinese society and transforming its culture. In Liu’s study, for example, one can read in literature how the introduction of masculine and feminine pronouns such as 她 and 他 also signified new forms of subjectivity (主体性). Like other postcolonial studies, Liu’s work criticized the idea of universal equivalence among cultures and concepts. Her 2004 *Clash of Empires* continued her postcolonial semiotic study, moving away from literature and the twentieth century to argue for the force of language and its significance in nineteenth-century struggles between the Chinese and British empires. Liu’s title is a criticism of Samuel Huntington’s *The Clash of Civilizations*, responding to that book with the statement that it is not civilizations but empires that clash. The control that the British exercised over the language of treaties with China imposed not only superficial word changes to Chinese language but the thinking that went with them, in the concepts of sovereignty, international law, and even the grammatical structure of Chinese language itself. New and existing words used in new ways became “supersigns,” linguistic signs that were no longer defined through one language but the product of interactions among competing sign systems, such as *yi* 夷, meaning “barbarian” rather than simply “foreign”; *zi* 字, meaning “word”; and *Zhongguo*/China 中国, designating the state that its sovereigns had designated *Da Qing guo* 大清国.

Yet similar tensions are revealed in Edward Gunn’s study of local language 方言 as it is used in the Chinese-language media of mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (Gunn 2006). Not only among but also within different locations there are hierarchies of local languages and tensions over how to use them in writing literature, film, radio, and television. Issues of personal and community identity and status, commercial interest, and educational and government administration all weave a complex network of concerns for what a particular local languages signifies, to whom, and for what purpose. This imposition of one language on another, whether offering new opportunities or suppressing older values, is examined in global and historic terms in Zhou Gang’s *Placing the Modern Chinese Vernacular in Transnational Literature* (Zhou Gang 2011). This was a systematic study of the vernacular movement in modern Chinese literature from the perspective of comparative literature, drawing on the experiences of vernacular movements in other times and societies (Italian, French, German, English, Japanese,

Indian, Arabic, Turkish, Vietnamese), on the sociolinguistic concept of diglossia (tolerance of multiple language styles), and on the concept of world literature. Among these approaches is how challenging emotionally it was for many Chinese writers to cope with the radical shift from a diglossic culture that placed classical language at the top of the stylistic hierarchy to a monolingual style in the vernacular. (A converse example is given in the abandonment of Yiddish and other modern languages in the movement to revive classical Hebrew in Israel.)

Very specific types of language use in the form of the modernist literature of China in the 1920s and 1930s have also generated different emphases on the postcolonial condition. Leo Ou-fan Lee's study of the modernist literature of Shanghai engages the historian's concern for the full social context. Lee concluded that modernist fiction was the product of the modern urban environment of Shanghai. Lee acknowledged the semicolonial status of Shanghai and shows that the modernist writers were fully aware of it, but colonialism was not the determining feature. This modernist fiction was an "imaginary" modernity, given that Shanghai was an unusually modernized community in which the writers themselves had only a peripheral place, but the fictional works are reflections on the material conditions of modern Shanghai. Lee's student Shih Shu-mei defined Chinese modernism as a semicolonial modernism: it was not reacting against the condition of modernity, as modernism did in the West, but celebrating modernity. It received no recognition from Western writers and scholars, who at most took an interest in the possibility of extracting a vision of a colonial society from which to confirm their own imperialist status. The only Chinese modernist literature with a spark of resistance to this cultural condition was the work of some academic modernist writers in Beijing (Beiping), who learned to value their cultural heritage from their education overseas (Shih Shu-mei 2001).

Another approach to postcolonial studies was taken by Chen Xiaomei in her study of modern spoken drama and media. Reviewing the source of postcolonial studies in Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Chen noted that Said's argument that the West has imagined the East in ways that support imperialist attitudes toward Eastern societies is derived from Michel Foucault's theory of discourse (话语) as a means of securing power. However, Foucault also argued that every discourse of power produces a counterdiscourse, and Said ignored this key element of Foucault's theory. So Chen's study focuses on occidentalism as the Chinese counterdiscourse to the Western discourse of orientalism. Moreover, through a series of studies in her book, Chen notes that, whether this counterdiscourse of occidentalism demonizes the West in order to promote state authority as a protector or idealizes the West as a source of liberation from oppression within China, it is a mix of Chinese and Western elements. Whether the literary work is Gao Xingjian's modernist yet very Chinese play *Wildman* or Zhou Li's popular novel *A Chinese Woman in Manhattan*, the work derives from both Western and Chinese discourses (Chen 1995). Claire Conceison revised Chen's "occidentalism" to examine the varying depictions of Americans in contemporary Chinese spoken drama between 1987 and 2002 (Conceison 2004).

Other responses to postcolonial studies have stressed both the significance of foreign culture and the equally important role of Chinese writers in adapting and converting overseas sources to their own vision of China rather than their vision being determined by foreign influences. Karen Thornber provided an extensive study of the contact with and response of Chinese, Taiwanese, and Korean literatures to Japanese literature during the era of the Japanese empire. Thornber's use of the term *transculturation* for this flow of texts is in contrast to Lydia Liu's term *translingual*. This contact

“cracked apart textual bodies, incorporating intra-empire literary fragments large and small into their own cultural spaces, and in doing so further hybridizing these spaces and those of their predecessors” (Thornber 2009 24). Thus, for example, Ba Jin’s novel *Family* (*Jia*, 1933) was a negative reaction to Shimazaki Tōson’s novel *Family* (*Ie*, 1910–11). During this era, Thornberg argued, “the modern Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Taiwanese literary worlds can no longer be regarded as separate spheres” (58). The work of Jing Tsu (Shi Jingyuan) also took issue with a key point in the work of Lydia Liu and Rey Chow, who argued that Lu Xun’s cultural criticism of China in *The True Story of Ah Q* (*A Q zhengzhuan*, 1921) was adopting the cultural criticism of the foreign missionary Arthur Smith in his book *Chinese Characteristics*. After a detailed empirical and interpretive study in which Jing Tsu refuted this claim, she went on to focus on the psychology of Chinese writers and intellectuals in the early twentieth century, such as Lu Xun and Ding Ling. In Jing Tsu’s view, strands of nationalism and cultural criticism like Lu Xun’s are subsumed under the common theme that Chinese perceptions of their own racial, national, or cultural failure fostered allegiances to nationalism, which serves individuals’ “needs to express collective allegiance” (Jing Tsu 2005 26) under the condition that the “identity of the nation must be perceived as having failed in some way in order for nationalism to come to its rescue” (24). However, elsewhere in *Failure* she also saw deliberate calculation in various appeals to nationalism via failure: “Nationalist rhetoric incorporates the recognition of failure as the very productive method of building the Chinese race” (55).

Postcolonial studies have also assumed an important place in the study of Taiwan and Taiwanese identity in relation to China and Japan, as well as the United States, although postcolonial approaches have been far more significant within Taiwan than in US-based studies. For example, June Yip (2004) included postcolonial studies in considering historical crises of identity for Taiwanese, going back to the Japanese colonial era, which gave rise to a local literature resisting Japanese cultural domination. However, Yip engaged several forms of theory to discuss the fiction and film of cultural crises in Taiwan. The highly informed studies by Sung-sheng Yvonne Chang of literature in Taiwan from the end of the Japanese colonial era through the 1990s place as much emphasis on Pierre Bourdieu’s model of a literary field of cultural production as a determining feature of literature as they do on intellectual or ideological choices (Chang 1993, 2004). In her essay “Representing Taiwan: Shifting Geopolitical Frameworks,” written for a collection of studies of Taiwan literature, *Writing Taiwan: A New Literary History* (文學臺灣), Chang also pointed out the relevance of Bourdieu’s model to scholarship: “Undoubtedly, the specific academic field (as defined by Pierre Bourdieu) and institutional framework within which we situate ourselves and from which we derive our evaluative standards play determinative roles in shaping our scholarly discourses” (Wang and Rojas 2007 24). Sylvia Li-chun Lin studied depictions of the 2/28 Incident of 1947 and the White Terror that followed in fiction and film as defining events for Taiwan’s national and ethnic identity. Yet even in this research Lin is less concerned with issues of postcolonial identity than with problems among writers, filmmakers, and their audiences of how to remember and represent traumatic events. These problems extend to gender, ethnicity, ideology, and memory. Lin’s goal was less establishing facts than tracing how literature and film over time gave different interpretations to events, and therefore she sets her study “against a monolithic and hegemonic interpretation” (Sylvia Lin 2007).

The topic of “literature in Chinese” instead of “Chinese literature” has extended from its center on Taiwan to global “sinophone studies.” This project was initiated by Shih Shu-mei in her book *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific* (2007). Shih discussed the variety of identities depicted in Chinese-language films and other visual art from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and North America, as well as the complexity and power of the circulation of images, and presented an argument for identities no longer defined by China or the diaspora by means of which China would remain a defining origin. She envisioned instead a decentered array of “sinophone communities” based on shared language rather than shared origin. Returning to writing, Jing Tsu (Shi Jingyuan) in *Sound and Script in Chinese Diaspora* (2010) discussed the sinophone in terms of the history of Chinese efforts to ensure that Chinese language would endure in the modern world, beginning with late-nineteenth-century attention to Goethe’s concept of world literature and China’s place in it and programs to romanize Chinese writing, down to Lin Yutang’s innovative typewriter, anticipating computerized Chinese script and issues of translation. Here and in the volume of collected essays that she and David Wang edited, *Global Chinese Literature: Critical Essays* (2010), she explored whether diasporic writing and sinophone literature are still tied psychically to China, whether literary “governance” still defines writers by their relative “allegiance” to China, and whether identity remains tied to the Chinese nation despite the transnational setting.

Issues about Contemporary Chinese Literature

Among the special topics that generated intense scholarly attention was the cultural production of the era of Deng Xiaoping’s leadership and reforms. Jing Wang (Wang Jin) viewed the rapid series of literary trends during the 1980s as closely integrated with the cultural criticism. She saw these as reflecting the historic nature of the Chinese educated and cultural elite as a whole in modern times, positioning themselves among each other and in society for status in order to bring about rapid social development. The rise of the market economy eclipsed these elitist movements, favoring what Wang saw as the cynicism of Wang Shuo as the representative of the new popular culture and commodity fetishism (Wang Jing 1996). Zhang Xudong offered a similar study, reviewing cultural criticism, fiction, poetry, and the transformation of fifth-generation Chinese film into a commercial enterprise in the early 1990s. Zhang also identified the cultural production of the 1980s as elitist but focused on its modernism as both “a social and textual experience” (Zhang Xudong 1997 28) particular to its historical moment. In discussing the poet Bei Dao, for example, “[T]he subjective, poetic urge to engage in a dialogue with the public is fostered by creating an image of the artist whose social function is based on an enhanced individual and professional status, dignity, and prestige” (131). The modernism of this era sought “to free itself from any existent order or institution in order to embrace an unfolding reality” (387). Yet, as Zhang made explicit, this movement took place within a dialectic in which an antithesis also emerged in state authority and commercial culture. Despite their sometimes harsh criticism of their objects of study, both Wang Jing and Zhang Xudong invoke the observations of the cultural critic Walter Benjamin to define the sense of loss that they share. In this sense, history as loss returned to literary study, together with a vision of potential future promise. Joining in the debate on the question of whether experimental writers like Yu Hua, Ge Fei, and others were modernists

or postmodernists, Yang Xiaobin argued that, though modernist in form, the experimental writers served as postmodernists to deconstruct a modernist vision of an emancipated subject and a teleology of history as a grand narrative characteristic of both the Republican and Maoist eras (Yang Xiaobin 2002). A point of view somewhat overlooked in their studies, the role of gender, was taken up by Lu Tonglin (1995). The two themes of loss and possible future promise have been explored in more recent studies, such as Jason McGrath's exploration of culture through fiction and film in China since the early 1990s and the onset of the socialist market economy (McGrath 2008). McGrath saw capitalism and globalization as dominating culture and leaving intellectuals without any consensus about the value of these developments, yet he also considered whether there is a postsocialist legacy that will endure as an alternative to present trends. Cai Rong (2004) focused on several writers during the 1980s and 1990s as exemplifying cultural and political situations that constituted "a sabotage of the humanist credo of self creation and self determination" and with that a crisis of the humanist subject: "The subject created by the writers is an antihero who neither signifies as the Communist superman nor is able to negotiate new positions to replace it" (227). On the other hand, Kong Shuyu traced the decline of the socialist print publishing system in the 1990s and the growth of commercialization in publishing, concluding that, although literature has been caught between commercial demands and state censorship, "the positive results of commercialization have outweighed the negative ones" (Kong 2005 8).

The poetry, fiction, cultural criticism, and film of the reform era and afterward also renewed scholarship on these fields. Again gender figured prominently in several studies, and in the large anthology of Chinese women's poetry compiled and translated by Julia Lin (2009). Michelle Yeh (Xi Mi or Hsi Mi) authored a monograph on modernist poetry since 1917 (Yeh 1991b) and an anthology of translations (1992). It is worth noting that Yeh introduced "modern" poetry as "modernist" poetry, thus excluding Maoist poetry but advancing a collective definition for modern Chinese poetry of the twentieth century regardless of specific time or location. For Yeh modern poetry shares a marginal social position, between tradition and modern society, with a voice of independence, individuality, self-analysis and self-reflexivity, freedom from traditional conventions, and engagement with foreign sources, together with certain other formal features. Yeh's sense of the continuity of modern poetry is exemplified in her analysis of the break between the Misty poetry (*Menglong shi*) of the 1970s and 1980s and the post-Misty poetry of the "Newborn Generation" of poets in the late 1980s and 1990s: "In spite of some differences in language and style, poets of the Newborn Generation probably have more in common with their predecessors than they are aware of or care to acknowledge. For one thing, they share the same aesthetic consciousness about the autonomy of poetry and the same belief in poetic freedom; for another, they use such similar themes as alienation, the quest for identity, and the intense exploration of the individual psyche" (Yeh 1992 xxxiv).

Although scholars of other nations have often been more prominent than US-based scholars in publishing work on contemporary Chinese poetry, US-based scholars have contributed steadily. In 1983 the first translator of Bei Dao's poetry, working with the poet, sent the translations with Chinese text to the Cornell University China-Japan Program (now the East Asia Program) for publication (Beidao 1983). Subsequently nonacademic publishers took over these poems and Bei Dao's later work (Beidao 1988). The study of Bei Dao's poetry has appeared in numerous articles and a book (Li

Dian 2006). The criticism of Bei Dao's poetry has also sparked controversy, as when the scholar of classical Chinese poetry Stephen Owen wrote a review that denigrated the value of Bei Dao's writing as verse written for translation and circulation as world literature in order to please overseas readers (Owen 1990). Both Michelle Yeh and Rey Chow responded, Yeh commenting that Owen measured Bei Dao's verse according to Owen's own essentialist vision of Chinese culture rather than in terms of its actual historical context and the personal circumstances of the poet himself (Yeh 1991a). Chow viewed Owen's statements as serving his own self-interest as an "orientalist": "Basic to Owen's disdain toward the new 'world poetry' is a sense of loss and, consequently, an anxiety over his own intellectual position" (Chow 1993 3). Owen much later returned to the topic of world literature and modernist or new poetry in the context of international and national cultural hierarchies that overlook much cultural production, such as the practice of composing classical poetry in contemporary China, which is arguably more popular than new poetry forms (Owen 2003). Michelle Yeh's accomplishments in discussing modern poetry have encouraged younger scholars, such as those represented in a volume of collected essays on recent poets in China and Taiwan, *New Perspectives on Contemporary Chinese Poetry* (Lupke 2008). New studies of long-standing problems in modern poetry have also appeared, such as John Crespi's exploration of the ways in which modern Chinese poets throughout the past century have sought to work out issues of how to write modern poetry that can also deliver a compelling oral presentation when read or chanted aloud (Crespi 2009).

Chinese Literary Thought and Aesthetics

Chinese literary thought and aesthetics have also attracted increasing attention since European scholars introduced these topics in earlier decades. Although attention to the topic had produced a number of articles by US-based scholars, the first systematic, book-length survey was edited by Kirk A. Denton in 1996, covering the late Qing dynasty to 1945 (Denton 1996). Denton's own study of literary thought and practice focused on Hu Feng and Lu Ling (Denton 1998). Returning to the notion of the romantic self divided between a vision of emotional sensitivity and one of heroic achievement that Leo Ou-fan Lee had introduced (Lee Leo Ou-fan 1973), Denton argued that Hu Feng's literary thought and Lu Ling's fiction tried to encompass both: the emotionally sensitive self liberated the individual from traditional conventions, while the heroic self was aimed at resisting Western domination. Yet the struggle between these two selves remained an unresolved reality that these Chinese writers sought to represent. The heated debates over aesthetics and cultural criticism in China during the 1980s, on the one hand, and the profusion of theoretical studies in the United States, on the other, combined to produce several books on Chinese theory. Tracing the concept of the sublime from the late thought of Wang Guowei to the culmination of its status in the Cultural Revolution, Wang Ban offered a highly informed, thoughtful argument that Chinese aestheticians have invested in the sublime a vision of the masses together with the Chinese state, thereby turning aesthetics into a political vehicle that found its way into the revolutionary realism and romanticism of literature and theater, and that few writers (such as Lu Xun and Zhang Ailing) resisted until the post-Mao era (Wang Ban 1997). Whereas Wang Ban analyzed revolutionary fervor as sexual sublimation, Wendy Larson (2009) later countered that what Chinese texts have referred to as revolutionary "spirit" is its own form of conscious

subjectivity, exemplified in Lei Feng, and should not be subsumed under some Western psychoanalytic discourse. In making this argument, Larson also called for scholars to cease reducing all Chinese literary texts to demonstrations of Western theories. Liu Kang reviewed the aesthetics of a series of Chinese thinkers (Liu Kang 2000). Although there was virtually no contact between them, a number of Chinese Marxists, from Lu Xun, Qu Qiubai, and Hu Feng to Zhu Guangqian, Li Zehou, and Liu Zaifu, expressed concepts similar to those of European Marxists outside the Leninist-Stalinist vision of the Soviet Union. Liu aimed to show the relevance of Chinese Marxists' aesthetic thought and the issues of its practice to the study of Western Marxism. Qu Qiubai, for example, shared certain concerns with Gramsci in Italy about the "organic intellectual" among the masses. Yet Qu's ideas were taken up in social practice through Mao, whereas Gramsci's never were in Europe. Liu's comparative study served to displace a Eurocentric Marxist discourse in contemporary academia. Peter Button more recently published another ambitious study of aesthetics (Button 2009). Button introduced Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's concept of an "eidaesthetic"—literature as an extension of philosophy—to understanding modern Chinese literature as the experience of one culture in a global spread of the belief in literature as an aesthetic means of achieving truth and human freedom. The now forgotten theory of "thinking in images" (*xingxiang siwei* 形象思维), which the Chinese philosopher Cai Yi 蔡仪 introduced in the late 1940s from nineteenth-century Russian thought, and which spread through Chinese literary thought, is a key to understanding that Chinese literary thought and socialist realism shared the same fundamental concerns as did its critics. Those critics include US-based scholars from C. T. Hsia to Marston Anderson and David Der-wei Wang, who have misconstrued the literary production of Maoist China.

Defining the Modern

Scholars also worked out other conceptions of how to characterize modern Chinese literature as a whole. Tang Xiaobing (2000) provided a reading of representative texts of fiction and film throughout the twentieth century to define a dialectic between the desire to make heroic contributions to a utopian society and desire for the enjoyments of everyday life. Tang also moved between describing the specific historical circumstances of the texts and Fredric Jameson's theory of how to define these circumstances, and between psychoanalytic exploration of texts as representations of desires and nonpsychoanalytic descriptions of them. Wang Ban (Wang Ban 2005) shifted the focus from individual psychology to mass psychology in discussing the role of collective trauma found in literature and other cultural production in modern times. Wang joined in the critique of modernity, inaugurated by Walter Benjamin, as a traumatic experience in order to replace the defunct grand narratives of redemption, moving away from determinism and moral conundrums to a new grand narrative of something involuntary that still impinges on memory, experience, and moral choice, to explain why history is not being properly understood and morally lived. Wang's work adapted the vision of Benjamin toward modern history from Benjamin's Eurocentrism to a specifically Chinese set of historical circumstances. Like Wang, other scholars joined in organizing their research around the concept of modernity as shock and trauma. Yomi Braester 柏佑銘 (2003) explored how writers and filmmakers from Lu Xun to Wang Shuo and Jiang Wen's *In the Heat of the Sun* 阳光灿烂的日子 have repeatedly refused the role of

affirming history as progress or their work as reliable memory in support of empirical certainty, but rather as traumatized accounts of the shock of modern change. Michael Berry (2008) explored the role of a set of historic atrocities and traumatic events on Taiwan and in mainland China in literature and film. David Der-wei Wang turned to the representation of suffering in modern Chinese literature as a defining feature of modern Chinese history, exploring theories of how depictions of violence and suffering served a variety of literary and psychological ends for writers (David Wang 2004). Engaging a formalist method of Gary Saul Morson in *Narrative and Freedom* (1994), Sabina Knight introduced to Chinese literature the concepts of how narrative structures may reinforce a sense of time as determining the fate of characters or time as moments in which characters have the agency to make moral choices. Knight surveyed twentieth-century literature to discuss texts that “demonstrate a deep commitment to moral agency in the face of pervasive deterministic discourses” from traditional and modern sources such as Marxism (Knight 2006, 259). Knight found considerable tension in May Fourth literature: “Works by such writers as Lu Xun and Ye Shaojun usually imply that although characters may be shaped by outside forces, they are not determined by them. At the same time, these writers often drew characters as symbols of general types, and a type is by definition determined” (98). On the other hand, the post-Mao era has offered distinctive texts such as Dai Houying’s *Humanity, o humanity* 人，啊人， which “mark a high point in the representation of moral responsibility in twentieth-century fiction” (162), and the works of Mo Yan, Yu Hua, and Zhou Weihui, which raise complex questions about what moral choice is for characters who have agency. Lee Haiyan, in *Revolution of the Heart* (2007), identified discourses of love as determining all other visions of modernity in China. Inevitably recalling Leo Ou-fan Lee’s *The Romantic Generation of Chinese Writers* (1975), Lee Haiyan’s study also marked a significant departure. Whereas Leo Ou-fan Lee had sought to identify a theme of cultural continuity by identifying an essence of romantic emotionalism and heroism, Lee Haiyan focused on moral discourses of love broadly conceived as emotional attachments ranging from filial piety to nationalistic passion as structures of feeling, according to the Marxist theorist Raymond Williams. Whereas Leo Ou-fan was concerned with the continuity of legacy, Lee Haiyan adopted Michel Foucault’s concept of discontinuous historical periods in which discourses that shape understanding (epistemes) are reconceived. Modern China, from the late Qing to the founding of the People’s Republic, was defined through three such distinctly different discourses of love.

Since its inception as a field of specialization, scholarship on modern Chinese literature has questioned the relation of the modern to the premodern and whether the May Fourth era should be taken as defining the boundary of the modern. Jaroslav Prusek’s student Milena Dolezelova-Velingerova from 1980 led research in Canada and Europe that argued that Hu Shi, Lu Xun, and other May Fourth literary figures had underestimated the formal achievements of late Qing literature and its contributions to modern literature. Prusek fostered Theodore Hutters’s interest in “linkage between the new and the old” (Hutters 1984, 126) through his persistent attention to this question of some degree of continuity between the new literature of the May Fourth era and the literature of the preceding period. By 1988 Hutters could write that the May Fourth vision of literature was established in the late Qing: “While the days of *guwen* and parallel prose were assuredly numbered, the disposition to see writing and literature as active instruments at the core of culture lay at the center of the New Culture movement that arose only a few years later. And from that movement sprang the powerful ideologies that were

to vie for hegemony in China from 1919 on” (Huters 1988, 272). In 2005 Huters argued the case for continuity between May Fourth and the late Qing by studying Lu Xun’s well-known ambivalence toward the West, China, and revolution as a feature that he actually shared with the literature of the late Qing rather than one that he possessed simply as an individual (Huters 2005). Already in 1997 David Der-wei Wang had joined the reevaluation of the modern as stretching back to the literature of the nineteenth century, offering a form of modernity that the New Culture of May Fourth and later decades had repressed (Wang 1997). Wang read this earlier literature as being innovative in responding to modernity on its own terms rather than imitating translated Western literature. The innovations included new forms, character types, situations, themes, and even ideologies, such as Liang Qichao’s attention in *The Future of New China* 新中国未来记 (1902) to models of government and society found in Japan and America. Patrick Hanan noted that the contest that John Fryer sponsored in 1895 in 万国公报, *The Chinese Globe Magazine*, for fiction attacking “the three great evils of Chinese society—opium, the examination essay, and foot-binding” (Hanan, 2004 21) resulted in, among other submissions, an anonymous novel that Hanan noted “deserves to be regarded as the earliest extant modern novel” (21), *The Delightful History of a Glorious Age* 熙朝快史, written in 1895 and published in 1897. One of the admirable studies to come out of this reconsideration of the nineteenth century was John Kowallis, *The Subtle Revolution: Poets of the Old Schools during Late Qing and Early Republican China* (2006) in which Kowallis painstakingly analyzed and interpreted classical poetry of a half dozen celebrated poets of the nineteenth century. In the poetry of Chen Sanli and Yi Shunding he discerned subtle expressions of the shock of modernity and intimations of the impending loss of traditions that have also characterized modernist poetry in the West.

The general breakdown of previous historical and aesthetic frameworks for the study of modern Chinese literature provided new opportunities for the study of popular literature, begun by Perry Link. One major example of this is the research of Jeffrey Kinkley, first on Chinese crime fiction from its modern origins to the 1990s, including the relation of fiction to Chinese legal systems (Kinkley 2000), and then on novels of official corruption from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s (Kinkley 2007), which offered a gloomy view of a society saturated with corruption rather than a promising world economic power. A series of publications have also sought to analyze both Jin Yong’s martial arts novels and their place in economic and political terms, as well as cultural and literary (Hamm 2005; Huss and Liu 2007). In writing about Jin Yong, Christopher Hamm also extended the discussion of the martial arts genre as a whole (Hamm 2005), and Petrus Liu in comparative literature has focused on the “stateless” world of martial arts novels and the politics this implies for a range of issues from gender to the Cold War (Liu Petrus 2011). Martial arts, romance novels, and other genres of popular fiction were reexplored in light of their relation to serious or high literature in *Rethinking Chinese Popular Culture* (Rojas and Chow 2009).

Film, Visual Studies, and Media Studies

Since the 1980s the field of modern Chinese literature has also extended into film, and more recently theories of visual studies and practices in television. The entry into film studies was partly a realization of its importance by the mid-1980s and partly because there were almost no scholars in film with

knowledge of Chinese and modern Chinese culture. The first book on the history of mainland China film was Jay Leyda's *Dianying*, based on his work cataloguing Russian films for the Beijing Film Archive, not on his prior knowledge of Chinese film (Leyda 1972). In 1984 members of the small Association for Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL) brought together a panel of scholars in literature, history, and film that resulted in a small volume, *Perspectives on Chinese Cinema* (Berry 1985, 1991). A number of works cited above published since the early 1990s include discussions of film, and film has since been fully incorporated into the work of dozens of scholars in literature, in addition to scholars whose primary field is film. The historian Paul Pickowicz published a number of the early studies through his research in the Beijing Film Archive and fostered the work of several younger scholars, resulting in such studies as *From Underground to Independent: Alternative Film Culture in Contemporary China* (Pickowicz and Zhang 2006). Among those he encouraged is Zhang Yingjin, the most prolific and broadly informed scholar of film. Zhang's first book reviewed how writers and filmmakers of the Republican era with great ambivalence associated Shanghai and Beijing with different notions of time, space, and gender, and in turn different associations with notions of the countryside (Zhang Yingjin 1996). Zhang went on to coauthor an *Encyclopedia of Chinese Film* (Zhang and Xiao Zhiwei 1998) and then to publish a history of Chinese film, covering forms, themes, market conditions, and audience reception for film in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong (Zhang Yingjin 2004). In *Screening China* (Zhang Yingjin 2002) Zhang, like Wendy Larson, took issue with other US-based critics for imposing Western critical theory on the study of Chinese film without adequately engaging Chinese sources and local specificities, and at the same time criticized Chinese film for pandering to Western audiences and critics. For example, the depiction of peasants in a film like Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum* 红高粱 (1987) derived from an earlier generation of Hollywood imagination of Chinese peasants, somewhat in the fashion of the "self-ethnography" described by Rey Chow. Thereafter, Zhang turned his attention more to two areas not emphasized in his history of Chinese film (Zhang Yingjin 2004), one being the "polylocality" or multiplicity of locations that produce or contribute to Chinese film globally (Zhang Yingjin 2010), and the other being the role of star performers (Zhang Yingjin and Farquhar 2010). Expanding on a contribution to a collection of essays on early Chinese film (Zhang Yingjin 1999), Zhang Zhen published the first major study of the early history of Chinese film by focusing on the body, the bodies of spectators in the venues for showing films, and the bodies of performers in films (Zhang Zhen 2005). Like Zhang Yingjin and Zhang Zhen, Yomi Braester returned to the topic of the city, exploring how film and spoken drama have envisioned urban space since 1949 and how they have responded to urban renewal and demolition (Braester 2010). A variety of other special topics have drawn scholars' attention, some including literature, such as Lu Tonglin's study of gender (Lu Tonglin 1993), a valuable study of film adaptations of novels (Deppman 2010), Cui Shuqin's careful feminist analysis of depictions of women from early Chinese films to the 1990s (Cui 2003), and a collection of feminist studies of Chinese women's films transnationally (Wang Lingzhen 2011). Among the newer directions in gender studies, Song Hwee Lim (Lim 2006) explored films about homosexuality in mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong in the context of both the social realities and the film cultures of these three societies.

The growing engagement with the significance of visuality led from film studies into visual culture more broadly, concepts drawn from the theory of visual studies, and research on television,

art, multimedia, and the Internet. One of the first and most prolific scholars to incorporate visual culture into his research is Sheldon Lu (Lu Xiaopeng). Beginning in the late 1990s Sheldon Lu has published research on contemporary Chinese film, art, and television as transnational, examining the production and circulation of Chinese-language films among various societies, authoring book-length studies (Lu Sheldon H. 2001, 2007) and editing collections of articles on film relevant to this topic (Lu Sheldon H. 1997; Lu and Yeh 2005). Lu defined multiple responses to modernity that exist together in the same space, rather than being periodized in historical time, and suggested likely directions that cultural responses will take. While television dramas and other programming and advertising were studied for specialized reasons, such as language issues (Gunn 2006), television drama as a focus of research has also developed in book-length studies by Zhu Ying (Zhu 2008; Zhu and Berry 2009) and Zhong Xueping (Zhong 2010). Beyond film and television, Carlos Rojas employed historically specific versions of psychoanalysis to discuss a varied set of ways of seeing and understanding vision in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Chinese literature, photography, and art, as well as film (Rojas 2008). Rojas's concern with modernity links his work to studies in literature, while his theoretical concern with visual studies and culture is closely related to the work of art historians such as Craig Clunas (Clunas 1997).

Emerging Directions

Scholars in literature have continued to develop new topics, such as joining with scholars overseas to research the Internet. The field of literature and medicine has generated several recent studies, while the topic of literature and the environment is just emerging in such studies as Karen Thornber's *Ecoambiguity: Environmental Crises and East Asian Literatures* (University of Michigan Press, 2012).

Note

Edward M. Gunn is Professor of Modern Chinese Literature at Cornell University, where he has taught Chinese literature, film, television, and cultural criticism. Apart from translations, his book-length publications include *Rendering the Regional: Local Language in Contemporary Chinese Media* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), *Rewriting Chinese: Style and Innovation in Twentieth-Century Chinese Prose* (Stanford University Press, 1991), *Twentieth-Century Chinese Drama: An Anthology* (Indiana University Press, 1983), and *Unwelcome Muse: Chinese Literature in Shanghai and Peking, 1937–45* (Columbia University Press, 1980), which surveys Chinese literature under the Japanese occupation. He received his doctorate at Columbia University. He is a member of the Association for Asian Studies and the Modern Language Association, for which he has served on the Committee for Texts and Translations and the Board of Advisors for the journal *Publications of the Modern Language Association* (PMLA).

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Studies of Modern Chinese Literature

Ban Wang

Modernity, Everyday Life, and Time

In the last two decades, modern Chinese literary studies have taken a variety of perspectives. Critics have focused on the linguistic, literary strategies of disruption and subversion; on the dispersing, mobile thrust of subjectivity; on the unleashing of desire, the unconscious, and bodily performance; and on everyday life of private pleasure and comfort. The most salient development, however, is a surging interest in the broad transitions, past and present, under the rubric of modernity. While many scholars keep to the text-centered approach and engage in the reading of textual and narrative nuances, the upsurge of interest in modernity is moving in a sociohistorical direction. In this light, stories of modern Chinese literature and film are recast within a cluster of concepts: modernity, modernization, or postmodernity. I will begin with the turn of modernity in current scholarship of Chinese literature. Although prominent scholars, such as professors David Wang, Leo Ou-fan Lee, Lydia Liu, and others, have delved into similar questions, I will deal with three books on the subject of modernity. Tang Xiaobing's wide-ranging *Chinese Modern* reads a string of seminal literary and film texts spanning the twentieth century. It covers literary texts of the late Qing period, May Fourth, and the ill-defined 1930s and the 1940s. It also takes a look at socialist literature and theater in the Mao age. The ideological and political dynamics of that age heralded some exciting motifs later. Tang moves on to address cultural and literary practices in the age of reform, the liberalization of the market economy, and the rise of the consumer society. For scholars of modern Chinese literature, it is always daunting to survey the morass of the twentieth century, with or without a clear thematic orientation, but Tang finds a useful wedge into the huge mass of historical, discursive, and aesthetic material. This is the interplay between the heroic and the quotidian.

The book is a refreshing inquiry into the contested notion of the modern and its components in modern Chinese literature and film. The story of modern China evolves around a central dilemma in China's quest for modernity: the dynamic tension between the heroic and the quotidian. This tension brings together the utopian yearnings of the political community and the private desire for fulfillment, revolutionary passions and domestic routines, mass culture spectacles and self-absorbed aesthetics, and the impulse for transcendence and retreat to everyday enclaves of private life.

The concept of the heroic evokes my extended treatment of the aesthetic of the sublime in modern Chinese political culture in the book *The Sublime Figure of History*. With this concept Tang refers to the momentous actions, theatrical spectacles, and epoch-making collective drives of modern China—the image of a grandiose history. The quotidian looks the other way at the comforting nooks and crannies of quiet pleasure, domesticity, the intricate workings of the psyche, the satisfaction of desire, and

daily commodity consumption. As the heroic generally ran roughshod over the quotidian for a whole tumultuous century—until the latter emerged as the new god of consumption, the quotidian in its tragic victimhood and resilient survival is bound to take on the air of heroism on its own. It has a “revelatory desolation,” possessing “its own beauty and grandeur” as part of “the heroism of modern life.”¹ It is heroism lived from day to day, quietly beneath of the relentless march of political history.

The book reinstates a positive form of everyday life from the grand heroism of the revolutionary and socialist periods. In studies of modern Chinese political culture, the reigning tendency is to see the political, social, and everyday realms penetrated by the state, with its official imperatives, policies, and symbols. The distance of the social from the political is acknowledged only as a negative of this totalitarian model. Most scholars are not too eager to find proof of decent everyday life in the socialist past. With the recognition of legitimate utopian desire in secular existence, Tang is able to show that there was life, and much of it quite rich, under the control of the state and in socialist mass culture. In other words, the everyday, though a secular rather than political ideology in its own right, is treated with seriousness and an appreciation of its values, not as an appendage to a bigger political and ideological framework.

The concept of the everyday, in the individual’s private life, has become quite popular in cultural studies in recent years. It entered Chinese studies as a politically charged category, subversive of institutional abstractions and residual ideological homogenization in the transitional period of the 1980s and 1990s. The affirmation of the everyday eschews utopian completeness and total collective mobilization. But the everyday does not remain the same in the different periods of modern China. In the socialist age, it might simply be a life form that perpetuated the basic needs and wants within the limited room of commodity exchange, not quite penetrated by politics. In the new market setting, however, the everyday risks becoming a fetish and losing its political and critical edge as it is being sucked into the vortex of consumption and the relations of exchange. There is a sense that history, ideology, and political practice are dinosaurs of a bygone age. This is certainly what the proponents of globalization and “end of history” want everyone to believe. What could be more everyday than a life as sheer flows of private consumptive desire, as flows of money and commodities, flows of images, and flows of capital? What can be more everyday than the chronological, quasi-natural flow of temporality indifferent to any goal-directed, still necessary utopian striving?

The book also discusses judiciously many important themes of modern experience that receive much attention these days. On this account I should mention Jason McGrath’s recent book *Postsocialist Modernity: Chinese Cinema, Literature, and Criticism in the Market Age*. This new trend attends to urbanization, urban culture, and the city, with its mobility and fluid sensibility, its glamour, consumption, and alienation; China’s connection to global capitalism; and the regime of simulacra. One important insight is the hidden connection between the global, market oriented pursuit of happiness and the revolutionary, utopian passions of the earlier socialist age. Tang’s book reminds us of the economic frenzy in the postsocialist, global age as a mirror image of the Great Leap Forward drives of the socialist period. Both have a mythical aura that aims to transcend the inertia of the everyday. This raises the increasingly important questions of whether modernity can free itself from its new self-created myths, whether any land can free itself from the woes of the hero, and whether the everyday can really become a reliable anchor for modern men and women in the promotion of both the common good and individual well-being.

Associated with the everyday is a new focus on emotion, feelings, and social relations. The most interesting study on this subject is my colleague Haiyan Lee's *Revolution of the Heart: A Genealogy of Love in China, 1900–1950*. In 2009 this book won the Joseph Levenson Prize of the Association of Asian Studies, attesting to the popularity of emotion as a scholarly interest. Lee's book is an ambitious and well-focused attempt to delineate the structure of “qing”, “sentiment” or “love” broadly defined in various shades of meaning, in modern Chinese literature, criticism, political theory, and moral discourse. With close attention to the varied historical conditions and discursive milieus, Lee analyzes and portrays many ways in which the structure of love is articulated in relation to the traditional ethical system, the liberal-humanist model of individualism and market society, and the communal, civic, and nationalist agendas. The modern structure of feeling is placed within the ever-shifting lines of alliance and enmity among different notions and imaginaries of ethical, social, and political order in Chinese modernity. In the modern world, where any inherited authority or belief system is inadequate to cement social ties and political order, the question arises: what can sentiment do, and what has it been made to do, in holding individuals together in a sustainable social order?

Previous scholarship on emotion tends to take an individualistic approach and sees sentiment and its libidinal manifestations as based on universal human desire and natural rights. Researchers lean toward a liberal or libertarian view deemed capable of rescuing modern individuals from the straitjackets of unfreedom: tradition, authority, community, politics, or nation. Lee's book goes beyond this truncated and narrow way of treating the subject. Refusing to see love in psychoanalytical and naturalized terms, Lee seeks to probe into love's provisional, variable significance in a given historical moment. Love is shaped in certain conjectures of articulation and debate, relative to particular interlocking themes and practices. Her analysis captures the moments when competing discourses and forces converge or clash to bring a pattern of emotion and sentiment to the fore. Overall, Lee identifies three structures of feeling. The first is the Confucian structure embedded in the family and kinship relations. Then there is the Enlightenment structure of feeling that extols romantic love but quickly sinks into a bland, everyday manner of sociality. This gives way to the nationalist and revolutionary ferment of feeling favoring the project of achieving national community. Finally, Lee analyzes the socialist mode of feeling and relating, and claims that it is a highly centralized and “socialized” (depoliticized in the sense of deprivation of moral choice) structure.

With the concern with finely textured everyday life comes a new interest in time or temporality. Sabina Knight's book *The Heart of Time: Moral Agency in Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction* could be a good case for such reflection. From a philosophical, moral vantage point, the book addresses a moral question of secular modernity in Chinese fiction: how much can human beings control their fate and exercise and realize freedom or agency in political environments, whether settled or crisis ridden, where options and roles seem prescribed or severely limited? This question stems from the conceptual repertoire of Western modernity or the Enlightenment. It asserts autonomy or sovereign subjectivity. Autonomous modern subjectivity is founded on an intrinsic ability, guided by moral judgment, to reason critically and act in the outside world. Scholars have discussed how Western discourses have, since the late Qing era, been absorbed and appropriated by Chinese thinkers. True to her duty and profession as a literary scholar, Knight works this philosophical and ethical reflection into her analysis of literary texts, trying to do so specifically through the concept of time.

As a critical concept, time is often associated with those forms of history and narrative that are organized with preconceived plans and informed by lineal progression. For this reason, critics devalue the teleological structure of time in favor of a flexible, mobile, multilayered vision of space. Knight deploys time to lay out a space of different views, voices, and agendas. Time here is meant to reveal the epistemological revelations of the external environment, as well as practical choices. Choices are often difficult, blind, or deliberative on the part of a human individual or character. Making choices is not a one-time deal: he or she repeatedly has to do it, each time in a different way, as time goes on. Over time, as they undergo changes and face the limiting circumstances of history, the individual and, perhaps more important, the collective make many choices, which are often contradictory or inconsistent. Time thus is subject to reevaluation and renewal, and it is this ongoing process, hour by hour, year by year, that is a measure of situated moral agency. In other words, moral agency is realized through the passage of time or the ongoing process of a narrative, episode by episode, action by action.

Sabina Knight discusses theoretical and methodical issues in their relevance to the study of modern Chinese fiction. She goes on to discuss how China's pursuit of modernity entails the issues of moral agency and responsibility for social change. The new form of human agency is a break from the traditional view. Knight delves into the traditional Chinese discourse to find similar issues of determinism, fate, retribution, and human will. In a closer look at the general trend of Chinese fiction, she identifies an inward turn, a turn toward interiority trapped in a state of helplessness and disorientation. This seems to jar with the prevalent claim of the May Fourth New Culture that people can be the architects of their own fortunes. Is the inward turn a sign of becoming modern and does it consequently lead to a sense of diminished agency and of being trapped in a state of alienation? Comparing classical works in premodern fiction and modern works, Knight argues, quite rightly, that it is our obsession with inner subjectivity that blinds us to the moral open-endedness that marks as much the traditional as the modern fiction.

Chinese fiction is marked by a paradox of the individual bonding with others in forging new social ties and the dreaded infringement of that bond on the self. Knight explores the relationship between the individual and the social by analyzing May Fourth fiction, the social fiction of the 1930s, and works of socialist realism. May Fourth writers discovered and asserted the romantic self coupled with patriotism. Unable to see any hope for the nation's future, they sank into a helpless state, wallowing in a deep, confused subjectivity. They proclaimed human, emancipatory agency, but there was little in reality to help them realize that agency in saving the nation. More engaged and less trapped in narcissistic wounds, writers of social fiction from the 1920s to the 1940s, instead of asking what they were to do, displayed "a new willingness to place ethical questions within a concrete social framework."² They edged toward a form of literature that analyzes society with a Marxist lens of political economy, class inequality, and emancipatory motifs. Knight is to be credited for reconsidering the fiction of the Mao era, a body of literary works that has been ignored because of the historical myopia resulting from the traumatic and disastrous consequences of the Cultural Revolution. In contrast to the conventional view, she discusses the tension between the political imperative and the whispers of dissent and personal initiatives in fiction. The discussion of the Mao era naturally leads to post-Mao fiction, which in turn gives way to the fiction of the 1990s. The 1990s are used by Knight to designate a new epoch

of literature because fictional works of that decade responded to a time of drastic reform, expanded market economy, and penetration of commodity exchange into human relationships.

Like other critics increasingly drawn to the Mao period, Knight delves into individual writers' difficulties in the face of the extended dilemma between party doctrine and individual initiatives. What sets her account off from other works is, first, a refusal to impose ahistorically a fixed "authoritarian," monolithic "regime" on the emergent moments of the Chinese Revolution, which were marked by a confusing mixture of communism, populism, nationalism, and anarchism. Second, she takes a much closer look at the stirrings of dissent, as well as the thought process of each writer, thereby avoiding treating the authors and their works as puppets and props in a broadly deterministic scheme. This, with its new focus on the analysis of human agency in a highly controlled context, is a welcome shift from text-centered analysis.

But I think Knight might have pushed her analysis further. To take the revolutionary legacy and writings seriously, one has to look at party policy, as well as the socialist agenda, not as the arbitrary will of a power-hungry gang of leaders but as a dynamic social process responding to challenges and difficulties in specific historical circumstances of colonialism and nation building. This does not mean that providing more historical context will justify the arbitrariness of the party. Rather, more contextualization will make "false consciousness" or "aberrations" more intelligible as human stories. Human agency needs to be considered as belonging to individuals, communities, society, and the state as interconnected parts of a collective endeavor. To replay the logic of power that Knight evokes in her book, when agency is a "power over" things or people, power can lead to domination, but agency is also a "power to," a capacity for action that need not to be coercive.³

This question has much to do with the general concern with power and moral agency in modernity. In any political struggle, established powers and empowerment from the bottom should be connected dialectically. The "power to" has to be represented, expressed, and exercised against "power over" in order for one group or several to act in concert and with effectiveness. In order to take account of a revolutionary movement, its shifting alliances, and its organizations, one must reexamine the constant traffic and interpenetration of these two kinds of power. This would do justice to modern Chinese history and would draw more attention to the people's agency. It would reveal the Revolution as a story of how millions of human beings empowered themselves by developing new relations with others and by rebuilding local communities and the nation. It would then be possible to view a society or nation as a large arena for human agency. As Hannah Arendt said, freedom "is actually the reason that men live together in political organization at all."⁴ With this enlarged sense of political agency, we can look beyond the helpless agitation and wallowing in subjectivity of the individual, popularly represented by the fate of the light sleeper in Lu Xun's iron house. We can take a new look at the unmaking and remaking of the house of a nation. This broad perspective might also give the writers themselves a larger political role in that they would become agents in this collective struggle, even in their portrayals of helpless, wandering characters. In this light, political power comes from participation and collective energy that has been rallied, and cannot be seen as the work of all-powerful, mythological leaders pulling the strings of billions of sleepy, benighted people.

Universalism, Culture, and Geopolitics

One unhealthy tendency in the context of globalization is that the study of language and discourse is increasingly detached from history and geopolitical confrontation. The myth prevails that nations and peoples around the world are moving toward a transparent, intersubjective language game or legal framework. Questioning this myth of superficial, imperial cultural exchange, some scholars are looking at the geopolitical struggle and interstate conflict that shape cultural scenes and discourse in Chinese history. They try to argue that the battle over words and translation carries as much weight as trade, domination, and conquest, fueled by conflicting claims of sovereign wills.

Lydia Liu's book *The Clash of Empires* is remarkable in the way it addresses the issues of culture and geopolitical conflict. Unlike the thesis of cultural clash, which has bedeviled the postmodern, postcolonial celebration of ethnic and cultural difference, her argument puts forward a strong message: what looks like law making or the forging of agreements in cross-cultural encounters is far more than cultural or discursive. Cultural or religious confrontations stem from conflicting claims over territory, juridical rights to markets, and entitlement and the recognition of sovereign power between states. Cultural clashes have little to do with some deep-seated primordial essence incompatible with other cultural essences. Rather, they arise from the encroaching power of the sovereign, imperial state confronted with their redoubled mirror image. One sovereign power begets another: this is the stark fact of how the modern world of sovereign nation-states was made and is still being made.

Liu challenges the postmodern, postcolonial view that sees the self-determining sovereignty of a group, community, or state as obsolescent. Dissolving sovereignty, of the state and people, into a vast space of empire echoes Foucault's theory of an all-encompassing network of disciplinary technology, permeating all aspects of the social fabric, government, the body, and the unconscious. This view fuels the current talk of empire, transnationalism, globalization, and flows of desire. A neutral, universal structure of knowledge, a positive system of legal codes, a semiotics of the sign, an empiricist social and political science, and a ground of commonality or exchangeability are imagined to preside over the life and death struggle of sovereign nation-states. The poststructuralist subject disappears into this whirlpool of factual positivities: it is no longer the autonomous subject endowed with sovereign desire and possessing the willpower to make choices and decisions. Decentered and dispersed, it is subjugated to the quasi-sovereign technocratic management structure; even its unconscious is structured like the language of the corporate media and empire. Likewise, the nation is no longer sovereign because it is subjugated to the invisible hand of some suprastate or supercapital, at the mercy of an empire that runs the affairs of humanity stripped of its variegated histories and pasts.

A universal system, a modern-day Esperanto (read English), an international legal system, and a utopia of homogeneity are said to be promoting global flow and exchange. From this disinterested mandate—not a sovereign will but a sovereign machine—one cannot help asking this question: who supervises the godlike Supervisor who runs the machine? If nobody does, it would seem that this universal system comes from nowhere. The truth, however, is that the sovereign interest and agenda of a hegemonic state are instituted and frozen into the law—international law. Parochial self-interests now safely hide behind the scene of law and order, which occults the genesis of the hegemonic state's expansion, concealing the terrain of inequality, domination, and subjugation. The outwardly

civilized document or system of signs occults the primal scene in which the signing of unequal treaties occurred at gunpoint and within firing range of gunboats in a nearby harbor.

Lydia Liu's book demonstrates this thesis by exposing what has been hidden behind the universal facade. Her analysis brings to light the unwieldy conflicts that have been haunting the reified surface of the instituted systems of law, signs, gift rituals, or grammar. Indeed, law making was driven by unlawful desires. One example is how Liu deals with the key issues linking imperial power to cross-cultural mistranslation. The international treaty signed after the Opium War banned use of the Chinese character *yi* because to the British ear the word sounds like *barbarian*. The ban had little to do with the word's different etymologies but derived from the clash of sovereign claims between the British imperialists and the Qing government's equally universal aspirations. The loaded, contested sign *yi*/barbarian is revealed to be fraught with conflicting interests and practices: the Qing's histories of differentiation and stratification of the native population, ethnic differences, diplomatic relations with outsiders, and British expansion in Asia. Throughout its history, the *yi* could be offensive or neutral or simply an expedient way of demarking a segment of the population. But in the nineteenth century, as the word got caught up in the power game of sovereign wills, war making, and treaty making, a sea change occurred. As it was revealed to be the "outcome of hostile encounters between the British and the Qing," the sign tended to become reified over and above its diverse histories and etymologies and adopted a "standard" meaning.⁵ The fate of this sign is an allegory, writ large, of instances of "cultural" clash and hostilities in law making, grammar formation, and ritualistic protocol. But the cultural or semiotic dimensions are more apparent than real. The controversy over the sign tells a story of nineteenth-century imperial rivalries in East Asia. As the British aimed to become the major influence in East Asia, the Qing regime tried to hold its ground. Mainstream historiography in the West, following the colonialist logic, tends to see the *yi*/barbarian or similar phenomena as a sign of Chinese xenophobia or closed-door mentality. Yet the sign was less a case of fear of foreigners than one of an expansionist agenda. In this light, the *yi*/barbarian, though contested and cleansed, became a self-fulfilling prophecy. If one has no barbarous intent, why would one fear a harmless word that could mean so many different things? Demeaning as the word might be, it cast a shadow on those who tried to avert its lethal gaze. This is why the treaty ban on the word was shortly followed by the barbarous burning and pillaging of the imperial palaces and bloody sacking of the capital.

While Liu's book questions the neutral aura surrounding the making of signs, international law, diplomatic protocols, semiotics, and translation, Theodore Hutner's book *Bringing the World Home* discusses China's cultural relations and fusion with the Western world and addresses universalism and particularism in the transitional period from 1895 to 1919.⁶ Beginning with China's defeat by Japan and ending with the rise of the May Fourth cultural movement, this period is riddled with tensions between old and new. In the throes of change, the tradition seemed to be dying and the modern was yet to be born. The period's murky atmosphere highlights the tenacious persistence of the past in the modern drive, challenging the conventional divide along a linear timeline. The intense intellectual debates opened up the floodgate of intellectual and literary creativity, giving rise to an early modern bloom of literary writing. What makes this book stand out is a managerial synthesis encompassing debates on literary theory, mutations of genres, recommendations of modernity, ideas of universalism, and, most important, close reading of key fiction works.

Increasingly, literary scholars are blending intellectual history with literary analysis. Hutters's study joins this trend but goes beyond it in its depth of textual analysis. A central paradox runs through the book. The need to appropriate Western models and break with China's past is troubled by a nagging anxiety. A backward gaze in hopes of maintaining continuity with China's past constantly pulls back the forward outlook. Hutters fleshes out this theme in a nuanced discussion of the late Qing debate on China's orientation during the Yangwu period of technology appropriation as a prelude to more instructional and social change. He goes on to reexamine Yan Fu's thinking about Western political theory, identify the new forms of writing emerging from the past or grafted to the Western models, analyze the world outlook that informed new literary theories, and describe the polemicist writing that engaged the ongoing politics, as exemplified by the reform leader Liang Qichao.

Hutters's reading of literary texts not only offers insight into literature but also substantiates the theme concerning the dilemma of borrowing the new and discarding the old. Invoking Chinese universal standards of civilization, he observes that these universal standards are compromised by their overt or covert links to the European or North American context. In other words, universalism may be a form of Eurocentrism. But I think this needs not always be the case. Universalism can be disengaged from its particular context. In the postmodern divisive mode, we tend to attribute the meaning of utterance to the speaker, his or her position and history, but the valance of ideas must transcend one's narrow position and culture to be meaningful and relevant to others. It seems this overrated difference enshrined in a rigid divide between culture and universalism accounts for the prevalent use of the word *hybridity* in the description of cultural mix in modern China. Hybridity is not that important if every cultural formation is necessarily hybrid from its birth to maturity. What makes *hybridity* sound paradoxical is the geopolitical dividing lines in the modern game of power and their stereotyping, purifying of cultural essence.

Trauma, Violence, and History

Scholars in modern Chinese literature have been paying much attention to psychology in history. Tang's book, mentioned earlier, takes a close look at the intricacies of the psychic makeup of the literary characters and offers us much more nuanced readings of modern subjectivity in the making. On the one hand, the psyche is overwhelmed by traumatic pressure and borders on collapse and disintegration. On the other hand, consciousness strains to overcome the downward slide by making a virtue out of helpless situations. The intertwining of the psyche with history has become a major trend in addressing trauma on a broader scale of culture. The trauma induced by social turmoil evinces a crisis of language, representation, and collective self-image. In a traumatic circumstance, the elevation of some virtuous or heroic figure for shoring up identity is much more than a personal matter; it is a necessary attempt to reconstruct the culture on its ruins. Among other studies, two books are worth our attention.

The first is Xiaobin Yang's *Chinese Postmodern: Trauma and Irony in Chinese Avant-Garde Fiction*.⁷ This book views historical and textual trauma as resulting from the imposition of ideological agendas in Chinese history. The reader of literature has to submit to a dogmatic voice that violently imposes its authority and brooks no gray areas or dissent. This stern voice indulges in the "Let me tell you this"

rather than laying out actual and experiential reality. Mao Dun's realistic fiction is offered as a prime example, along with other, more ideological writers.

Yang's book suggests two ways of deconstructing this grand narrative. One is from the inside out, detecting the inner fault lines already fracturing the canonic works. The established narrative is itself riddled with ambiguities, anxiety, and paranoia. Under critical scrutiny it disintegrates and falls apart. The other is to uncover the new innovative works that challenge the mainstream. The messy circumstances thrown up by the avant-garde challenge the glorious traits of the hero and the "objective" portrayal of reality. Canonical or not, sublime grandeur may degenerate into absurd gore or sheer horror. Examining a host of writers who emerged after 1985, such as Can Xue, Ma Yan, Yu Hua, Xu Xiaohu, Ge Fei, and Mo Yan, Yang shows that they all display a deconstructive thrust. Hurling the official narrative into the abyss, their works exhibit a ghostly evocation of traumatic memory and the inability to tie the loose ends of the crumbled history. They engage in ironic reversal and refuse to make meaning out of writing, sawing the tree branch they are sitting on. They are both at home and homeless, in and out of control. They engage in construction and deconstruction, deal in surrealism as realism, and thrive on the uncanny mix of the sublime and ridiculous.

Through the category of trauma Yang offers refreshing insights into the psychic workings that underlie the breakdown of the modern narrative and reveal the violence of history. The traumatized writers carry an impossible history within them—traces that cannot be assimilated into a linguistic structure. The avant-garde is a deferred action of remastering that seeks to link the scene of writing to the primal scene of injury.

Yang depicts the avant-garde as insurgents in revolt against discursive orthodoxy. Avant-garde fiction reflects on the abysmal meaninglessness of signifying practice and examines the slippery way the text is being formed and deformed, and comes about only to fall into dizzying disarray.

David Wang's *The Monster That Is History* deepens the connections among violence, trauma, and historical representation.⁸ As a comprehensive survey and in-depth analysis of various forms of violence in modern Chinese fiction, the book presents a literary chronicle of violence not only against the backdrop of the utopian drives of modernity but also in relation to the forerunners in classical Chinese fiction. In weaving together different strands of fiction and nonliterary materials, Wang depicts a mind-boggling killing field strewn with mutilated bodies and injured minds, a wretched slaughter bench of history where reason went mad, justice turned violent, revolution became destructive, and Enlightenment flipped over to become myths and ghosts. We are confronted with the monstrous reversals that constitute Chinese history. The book views violence as a built-in and constitutive feature in traditional Chinese culture, as well as in modern Chinese history. In bearing witness to violence and atrocity, literature can serve as more honest history writing and a mirror of moral admonition. There is, the author believes, a morality in the very form of literature that is superior to cut-and-dried or ideologically motivated history, a form that performs an ethic of remembrance against the possible recurrence of bloody history in the future.

Wang's interdisciplinary approach has unearthed and brought to life numerous authors and literary scenarios and facts buried under critical ignorance and oversight. The book's coverage is prodigious, and it contains many surprises from the hidden archives of Chinese literature. The author is adept at retrieving literary facts and scenarios in weaving narrative and argument. This wide-ranging project

throws a bridge between two strains of literature evolving divergently on the mainland and Taiwan but taking on many affinities. In fact the comparative analysis traverses a long duration of history and diverse geographic locations on the mainland, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. We witness violence in many places and times, in its varied historical forms: as self-imposed violence by writers on themselves, revolutionary violence as offshoots of antiviolence, violence of drastic change, violence of oppressive regimes, violence of foreign aggression, violence of natural disasters, and so on.

Intellectual Discourse and Postsocialism

I began my essay with a concern with modernity, which has spawned a lively intellectual discourse and inspired very interesting literary inquiries. Although literary scholars are more aware of broad social and political issues outside the text, they mostly take the text-centered approach. But as the image of rising China is becoming more contested, literary scholars are gaining political consciousness. They have begun to plumb the depths of ideological issues underlying literary studies. I will conclude with a brief review of an emergent discourse of socialist or postsocialist modernity that has a bearing on literary, film, and cultural studies. A very strong current in modern Chinese studies, this new discourse about “alternative modernity” focuses not on literature but on debates about China’s potentials and pitfalls in this transitional period and its future orientation. This intellectual soul-searching may be or is already remodeling conceptual assumptions that have shaped literary studies. Two books are worth our attention. The first is *One China, Many Paths*, a collection of essays penned by Chinese intellectuals and edited by Chaohua Wang. To have a good understanding of China one must take into account local agitations, the circumstances of lived experience, insiders’ sentiments, and their critical expressions. In editing this book Wang seeks to measure the heartbeat of contemporary China’s sensitive and critical minds. This book offers an ensemble of interviews and essays by the thinking minds of the Chinese intelligentsia. Remarkably, the writers still unabashedly see themselves as belonging to the intelligentsia and take it on themselves to tackle the pressing issues of the day. One might call this book a handbook of major intellectual pronouncements about China in the past two decades. Anyone who wants to understand the real issues and problems confronted by Chinese as shapers of their own fate will have with this volume a reliable guide. Scholars of Chinese literature and culture would do well to turn to this book for an appreciation of sociohistorical contexts and discursive undercurrents when writing about Chinese fiction, film, or mass culture.

In her brief account of the intellectuals’ educational background and later growth, Chaohua Wang ranges over the mutating issues and debates from the 1980s to the 1990s. The 1980s was imbued with a forward and outward-looking zeitgeist, filled with innocence and dreams. But the watershed events of Tiananmen in 1989 and Deng Xiaoping’s tour in southern China in 1992 ushered in a decade plagued by complexity and heterogeneity, competing visions, and perplexed reflections. Economic dynamism, political stagnation, and deepening social divisions made this period one of “interesting times” that tried humans’ souls. As people groped for a future, space for discussion widened. Debates were transformed from those centering on the humanities to those addressing pragmatic issues of social and economic restructuring; academic professions were becoming more institutionalized or acquiring more political and policy overtones. Wang actively participated in the Tiananmen protest

in 1989 and shares intellectual kinship with the writers and interviewees represented in this volume. Although it traces the footprints of her fellow travelers, her brief introduction itself is a unique voice in the intellectual scene it describes.

The conflict between liberalism and the New Left has become an important theme in recent years. It runs as a thread through the collection. In Wang Hui's essay, the question "Whither China?" defines the changing alignments of liberals and the New Left. The two contending positions emerged on the intellectual scene in response to international events: the Asian financial crisis shook faith in capitalism, and the NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade prompted intellectuals to have second thoughts about American values and democracy. This put the liberals on the defensive. Although it is important to come to terms with the changing realignments and splits in the seemingly polarized camps, applying political labels can be misleading. This is so not only because the two sides have so much in common but also because one side may change places with the other or make alliances before any position hardens. Still, it is useful to identify what intellectuals disagree about. Generally, the liberals constitute a right-of-the-center view. They are often economists who had a strong faith, until the recent global financial and economic crisis, in privatization, state nonintervention, and marketization without reservations or consideration of social welfare. More moderate liberals temper this market fundamentalism by critiquing and exposing the power monopoly and corruption that plague the "free" market economy. The New Left also has contradictory strains, but generally it focuses its critique on the collaboration between the market and the state. The Left argues that a healthy market depends on balanced and productive state control. The market is not new to China, and the history of world capitalism has shown that the market was not opened by the allure of commodities or needs but by gunboats and wars. It is not an act of God or nature, but a process of accumulating wealth and power. So the New Left intellectuals would like to see good state supervision of the fair market, with a public policy for the common good, distributive justice, and protectionist measures to shore up the national economy.

I have tended in my own scholarship to focus on the consequences of frenzied economic development and to express suspicion toward the gospel of the neoliberal market. However, the complex array of views expressed in this book made me sympathetic toward a certain set of liberal values, which is not necessarily the natural ally of the destructive market and often utters the strongest call for social justice, equality, and moral responsibility in economic development. Very often one cannot tell a liberal from a left-leaning writer. *One China, Many Paths* shows us that the controversy between the liberals and the New Left presents "a range that contains many intermediate and overlapping shades of opinion," reflecting the crossroads and uncertainties of the 1990s.⁹

Zhang Xudong's 2007 book *Postsocialism and Cultural Politics: China in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century* is self-evidently a big-picture study like *One China, Many Paths*. It seeks to grapple with and delineate a crossroads in China's drive to work out its own sociohistorical trajectory. In an earlier book, *Chinese Modernism in the Era of Reforms*, Zhang narrates and analyzes the cultural and political trends of the 1980s. Defining that period as a modernist moment of emancipation from Maoist ideology, he considers the limited privatization of the economy, the adoption of a universalist discourse of classical liberalism, and avant-garde writers and filmmakers. While it signals an attempt to dismantle the Maoist legacy, the modernist moment is also a continuation of socialist modernity by other means. Zhang's

Postsocialism moves to a new phase of development in the 1990s and examines the nascent conditions for the production of culture and reconfiguration of politics and ideology. The most remarkable of these developments are the state-sponsored, far-reaching market economy; the entry into the world market; the rise of consumer culture and an affluent middle class; the aggressive neoliberal discourse of globalization, quite in tune with the state's agenda; and China's sovereignty in the international system dominated by the United States. In this international landscape, there has arisen a confusing tangle of issues and categories facing the state and intellectuals.

The concept of "postsocialism" comes as an imaginative and self-consciously risky experiment to critique the neoliberal embrace of capitalist globalization on the one hand and the residual assumptions of the Cold War and revolutionary legacy on the other. Attempting to think through the new and the old and reshuffle different temporalities, the discursive configuration of postsocialism tries to steer clear of the pitfalls and mirages of reigning ideologies and myths. It strives to transcend the classical, received definitions of *capitalism* and *socialism*. It gestures toward an understanding of an ill-articulated social formation, both grounded in Chinese reality and responsive to the global market. Postsocialism is an active, flexible response to and an ongoing political praxis negotiating with global, postmodern forces of capital, but it also carries on certain unfulfilled agendas and motifs of socialism. It is a work in progress, reconfiguring and refashioning contested relations among state power, transnational capital, the emerging civil society, and a vibrant everyday life.

Zhang productively draws on political theories of nationalism, civil society, and political economy. He analyzes the tensions and affinities between the earlier phase of China's social development and the more postmodern/postsocialist stages. His analysis also applies to the readings of aesthetic forms. He examines the historical emergence of socialist realism, its conditions of possibility, and its legitimate utopian aspirations. This historical, nuanced reading of socialist realism has not been done, or not done with conceptual rigor, before in the criticism of modern Chinese literature and culture. Zhang's analysis of the current intellectual landscape and its recent past, where various discourses, arguments, and social trends collide and collude with each other, may prove to be very useful for literary and aesthetic analysis. It is timely and balanced, informed by a persistent historical perspective and a barrage of conceptual tools from political and social thought in the West.

This short essay is inevitably a partial picture of modern Chinese studies in the United States. In writing it I drew on my notes and thoughts as I reviewed manuscripts and books of the past ten years. Still, one can identify two general trends. The first is the text-centered approach, as critics focus on the body, subjectivity, hybridity, desire, and the structure of the text. Holding up the text as something meaningful and beautiful in itself, this view leaves untouched the underlying epochal, political, social, and economic struggles that shape and reshape textual interpretations. The second tendency is to understand broad political and social issues in the world outside the text and bring understandings of these issues to the interpretation of literary texts or aesthetic objects. This engaged approach brings political consciousness into literary studies. Far from destroying the beauty of literary, artistic, and film works, this approach reveals literary texts as not dead museum pieces meant for contemplation on a Sunday afternoon but a forum, an arena of struggle enmeshed in the daily struggle of humans in the globalizing world.

Notes

Ban Wang is the William Haas Professor in Chinese Studies at Stanford University and the Yangtze River Chair Professor at East China Normal University. He teaches in and is the chair of the Departments of Asian Languages and Cultures. His major publications include *The Sublime Figure of History* (Stanford University Press, 1997), *Illuminations from the Past* (Stanford University Press, 2004), and, in Chinese, *History and Memory* (Oxford University Press, 2004). He coedited *Trauma and Cinema* (Hong Kong University Press, 2004), *The Image of China in the American Classroom* (Nanjing University Press, 2005), *China and New Left Visions* (Lexington Books, 2012), and *Debating Socialist Legacy in China* (forthcoming from Palgrave/MacMilan, 2013). He edited *Words and Their Stories: Essays on the Language of the Chinese Revolution* (Brill, 2010). He was a research fellow with the National Endowment for the Humanities in 2000 and the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton in 2007. He has taught at Beijing Foreign Studies University, State University of New York at Stony Brook, Harvard University, Rutgers University, Seoul National University, and East China Normal University.

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¹ Xiaobing Tang, *Chinese Modern: The Heroic and the Quotidian* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000), 5.

² Sabina Knight, *The Heart of Time: Moral Agency in Twentieth-Century Chinese Fiction* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 105.

³ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁴ Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 146.

⁵ Lydia Liu, *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 95.

⁶ Theodore Hutners, *Bringing the World Home: Appropriating the West in Late Qing and Early Republican China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005).

⁷ Xiaobin Yang, *The Chinese Postmodern: Trauma and Irony in Chinese Avant-Garde Fiction* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002). Ban Wang's book *Illuminations from the Past: Trauma, Memory, and History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004) is a critique of the deconstructive analysis of trauma and history and an attempt to salvage utopian motifs and reconstructive potentials in the historical past.

⁸ David Wang, *The Monster That Is History: History, Violence, and Fictional Writing in Twentieth-Century China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004).

⁹ Chaohua Wang, ed., *One China, Many Paths* (New York: Verso, 2003), 40.

Developments in the Study of Chinese Linguistics during the Last Three Decades

Victor H. Mair

Introduction

A tremendous amount of progress has been made in the field of Chinese linguistics in North America during the past thirty years. In order to keep this essay within manageable limits, I shall not review the achievements of the period before the 1980s. Consequently, this survey will not discuss the works of our predecessors, such as Y. R. Chao, Fang-kuei Li, Nicholas Bodman, W. A. C. H. Dobson, Hugh Stimson, Paul Benedict, and others.¹ Nor shall I touch on Chinese language teaching, together with pedagogical theory and practice, which may be considered a separate field unto itself, not part of linguistic research per se.² Furthermore, I should point out that this essay makes no pretense at being comprehensive, neither of Chinese linguistics as a whole nor of its subfields; given the length constraints imposed by its inclusion in the present volume, it is impossible to achieve comprehensiveness. Instead I aim for representativeness and focus on outstanding publications by established authorities and promising young scholars. Nor is this essay meant to be a critical review that assesses and evaluates competing theories and new claims. The sole purpose of this survey is to describe as fully as possible within the space afforded the main developments that have occurred in Chinese linguistics and language studies in North America during the period in question.

The chief organizational principle of this chapter will be to divide Chinese linguistics into the following subfields: (1) general studies; (2) grammar; (3) phonology; (4) morphology; (5) syntax; (6) sociolinguistics, including language contact, planning, and reform; (7) lexicography and lexicology; (8) dialectology and taxonomy (classification and genealogy); (9) grammatology (writing systems); (10) etymology and semantics; (11) philology; (12) computational linguistics; and (13) psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, and the biological bases of language. The coverage of each of these subfields will include both synchronic and diachronic aspects, and will pay attention to both historical and contemporary issues. Some studies are difficult to classify under one or another subfield, inasmuch as they may bridge several seemingly quite disparate linguistic features. A good example of this multiaspect approach is the 1992 thesis of Wen-yu Chiang, whose title gives an indication of its breadth of interest: "The Prosodic Morphology and Phonology of Affixation in Taiwanese and Other Chinese Languages."

In order to provide precise references for those who wish to pursue further investigation within a given subfield, emphasis will be placed on particular publications rather than general trends. Therefore, I shall mention numerous book-length studies (including monographs, edited volumes, and dissertations), as well as especially noteworthy master's theses, chapters and journal articles, and

research papers. In some cases, however, I shall only mention certain research trends and individual scholars without, for lack of space, providing specific publications. If a thesis or dissertation was later published as a book or monograph, I usually merely mention the latter. Furthermore, although a scholar may have subsequently published numerous articles based on or developed out of his or her thesis or dissertation, I shall often note only the latter, unless a particular work has had an extraordinary impact by itself.

A good indication of the burgeoning field of Chinese linguistics in North America can be had by going online to ProQuest and searching for PhD dissertations (and some MA theses) on *Chinese language* and *linguistics* that have been written since 1979. There one will find over a thousand relevant dissertations and theses (with abstracts, previews, and full texts readily available). I should note that there are hundreds of North American universities in which doctoral research on Chinese languages may be conducted, and there are countless institutions at which master's level research may be carried out. The sponsoring colleges, schools, departments, programs, and institutes represent a bewildering variety of units devoted to linguistics, Asian or East Asian studies, education, computer science, psychology, and so on. The overwhelming majority of this research is devoted to Modern Standard Mandarin, but considerable attention has also been paid to nonstandard Mandarin, earlier stages of Mandarin, the so-called dialects (i.e., topolects), and premodern Sinitic and non-Sinitic Chinese languages at various stages of their development. About half of the dissertations have to do with language pedagogy (e.g., L1 and L2 acquisition and teaching) and/or comparative topics, especially between Chinese and English, but also with Japanese, Korean, and other languages. In some cases, studies have focused on complex questions pertaining to Chinese and two or more other languages (e.g., Chuang 2002). There have also been numerous studies on the non-Sinitic languages of China, for example, Bai (Minjia), Shui, Proto-Southwestern Tai, Kadai (Edmondson and Solnit 1990, 1997), Mongol elements in Manchu (Rozycki 1983), Tibeto-Burman phonology (Ju 1996), and so forth. In terms of practical applications of linguistic research, investigations have been carried out on Chinese languages as they relate to law, business, science, politics (e.g., propaganda and indoctrination), acculturation, translation, literature, and a diverse array of other topics.

Naturally, it would be impossible in the space of this essay to even begin to describe the abundantly rich research findings represented by these dissertations and theses. One of the best ways to keep track of up-to-date achievements in the field, however, is to consult the massive online lists maintained by Marjorie Chan, which are referred to overall as ChinaLinks but are divided into four parts: General Resources, Chinese Language Software and AV [Audiovisual] Programs, Chinese Language and Linguistics, and General Linguistics and Internet Resources. In this essay, I will mention only a few of the most distinguished and influential dissertations and theses that have not been published as articles or monographs, including a few that have not become particularly well known but deserve wider circulation. I shall make a special effort to introduce completely new types of research that have been carried out for the first time only in the last thirty years. I shall also attempt to provide at least one example of linguistic research from each of the major programs in North America, although—to save space—I will seldom mention specific programs by name. Suffice it to say that during the past thirty years there have been dissertations and theses on virtually all aspects of Chinese language and linguistics.

The question of exactly what constitutes studies on Chinese linguistics in North America is not an altogether simple one. For the purpose of this essay, I will consider as North American studies by individuals who were trained in North America or have taught in North America for an extended period of time, even if they are not currently living and publishing in North America, and studies by North American individuals, even if they are currently living abroad or publishing their works outside of the United States and Canada.

Not only is it difficult to determine any longer who is “North American” and who is “Chinese,” it is also increasingly hard to specify research trends as characterizing any particular part of the world. Whereas in the past most research was carried out by individuals pursuing their own agendas and working largely at a particular place, many investigations now are pursued by shifting groups of persons who are constantly moving around the globe. For example, a respected scholar may have been born in Henan or Heilongjiang, gone to college in Shanghai or Beijing, enrolled as a graduate student at Berkeley or Chicago or Canberra, taken a postdoc in Vancouver or Arizona, got his or her first job in Kansas or Georgia, taken a second job in Massachusetts or England, and then gone on to assume a position in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, or Nanjing. In the world of academia, geographic determinism and national boundaries are breaking down.

The same holds true of disciplines and subdisciplines. No longer is it possible to characterize linguistic research (and the individuals undertaking that research) as circumscribed purely by phonology, morphology, psycholinguistics, and so forth. Let us take, for example, a book like *Reading Chinese Script: A Cognitive Analysis*, edited by Jian Wang, Albrecht W. Inhoff, and Hsuan-Chih Chen (published in New Jersey in 1999). An overview of this collective work (edited by individuals from Germany, China, and Hong Kong who have taught and/or studied in America for long periods of time) describes it thus.

This volume uses unique properties of Chinese script to focus on morphological analyses during the character and word recognition process, though some of the reported work also pertains to the use of phonological information. In addition, this volume contains work on syntactic and pragmatic processes during sentence reading and three chapters that examine on-line processes. A comprehensive appraisal of cognitive processes during the reading of Chinese script that includes studies conducted by leading researchers from within and outside the mainland, this volume will be of interest to all those studying reading and visual symbol processing.

With such an eclectic approach, it is no longer possible to think of the study of Chinese linguistics as being divided into neat subfields or as being carried out by individuals who see themselves strictly as grammarians, phonologists, syntacticians, morphologists, and so forth.

Subfields

1. General Studies

During the period in question, two publication enterprises have effectively defined the field of Chinese linguistics in North America, namely, the *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* and the monograph series of the same journal, both of which were founded by William S-Y. Wang, who has been advised by a

distinguished board of associate editors. The importance of *JCL* and its monograph series cannot be overstated, inasmuch as they have served to introduce the best and most up-to-date research on Chinese languages and linguistics. Their editor, William S-Y. Wang, has also trained many top scholars in Chinese linguistics who are teaching and researching throughout the world. He himself has extremely broad interests, ranging from language change to tones and tonogenesis, neurocognition of written language, language engineering, and the relationship between genetics and linguistics. Well over two dozen of his most important papers are conveniently collected in Wang 1991a.

Another important journal that showcases the newest work on Chinese is the *Journal of East Asian Linguistics*. The emphasis of *JEAL* is to bridge the gap between traditional description and current theoretical research. Its editors are C.-T. James Huang, Mamoru Saito, and Andrew Simpson.

Other journals, such as the *Bulletin of Chinese Linguistics*, which is published by the Li Fang-kuei Society for Chinese Linguistics and Center for Chinese Linguistics at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the *International Review of Chinese Linguistics*, which showed great promise when it first appeared in 1996, but was discontinued after the first issue, were founded more recently. These have strong connections to Taiwan and Hong Kong but showcase primarily North American research. It is appropriate to mention at this point that during the past three decades there has been a very close connection between scholarship on Chinese linguistics in Taiwan and Hong Kong, on the one hand, and North America on the other. There are several main reasons for this phenomenon. First of all, many graduate students studying Chinese linguistics in North American universities originally came from Taiwan or Hong Kong. Second, some of those students from Taiwan and Hong Kong who obtained their advanced degrees in North America have returned to East Asia to teach, whether on graduation or after teaching in North America for a while. Third, many North Americans have also taken up teaching and research positions in East Asia or Southeast Asia. More recently the same pattern of close exchange is being repeated with regard to mainland China.

A tremendous resource for the study of the history of Chinese language is Endymion Wilkinson's celebrated *Chinese History: A Manual* (2000). The importance Wilkinson places on language is obvious from the fact that he makes it chapter 1, and chapter 2 is devoted to dictionaries of Chinese. Wilkinson's very extensive treatment of materials and issues pertaining to language is extremely insightful and full of invaluable information and raw data.

John DeFrancis's *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy* (1984) is probably the best introduction to Chinese language and script for someone who knows very little or nothing about them. Jerry Norman's *Chinese* (1988) is a magisterial survey of Sinitic languages and dialects for those who already know a fair amount about them and are familiar with linguistic theory. S. Robert Ramsey's *The Languages of China* (1987) is the most comprehensive overview of all the languages of China, both Sinitic and non-Sinitic. It is especially good on "minority languages" (except for Tibetan), pays due attention to writing systems, and has outstanding maps. Zhou Youguang is a centenarian scholar in the People's Republic, but his *The Historical Evolution of Chinese Languages and Scripts* (2003) was published in a wonderful bilingual edition with complete English translation by the American scholar Liqing Zhang from the National East Asian Languages Resource Center (NEALRC) of Ohio State University, so it is worthy of inclusion in this chapter. The book touches on all aspects of Chinese languages but is especially authoritative on issues pertaining to language reform. Although many other general books

on Chinese have been written during the past three decades, some with attractive, impressive, and even presumptuous titles, none can compete with the four volumes by DeFrancis, Norman, Ramsey, and Zhou and Zhang in terms of quality, inclusiveness, and insightfulness. All four remain in print and are not outdated. For newer and more specialized developments (e.g., generative syntax, evolution of tones, acquisition of language ability by children, and so forth), the work by Huang and Y-H. Audrey Li is a convenient source (1996). William S-Y. Wang (1989) and Wang and R. E. Asher (1994) position the study of Sinitic languages in a larger context than that of China itself.

2. Grammar

Some of the most innovative and interesting work on Chinese linguistics in general and on Chinese grammar in particular has been done by individuals with a strong mathematical bent or who do not focus exclusively on Sinitic but are linguists first and Chinese specialists only secondarily. The excellent functional reference grammar of Mandarin by Charles N. Li and Sandra Thompson (1981), which does not contain a single Chinese character in all of its seven-hundred-plus pages, is a good example of this type of approach. (Likewise, Jerry Norman's *Chinese* has only a few characters in its illustrations.) It is because of this purely linguistic nature that the great Chicago linguist James D. McCawley was inspired to write a perceptive, substantial review (1989) that was in fact intended as a sort of supplement. McCawley wrote numerous other essays on Chinese, including one (1992) in which he tackles the thorny problem of parts of speech in Sinitic grammar, particularly Mandarin. Charles Li has collaborated with Sandra Thompson and other scholars on diverse projects, but some of his most innovative work has been done by himself, such as his study (1996) of Late Old Sinitic as a cryptic language with a minimal grammar.

In a sense, Tsu-Lin Mei may be considered the father of historical grammatical studies. Although he taught at Cornell University for decades and has collaborated with American scholars on various topics (e.g., Norman and Mair), his most important studies on Chinese grammar have been published in Chinese in East Asia, so they are not listed in the bibliography of this essay.

Among the most popular subjects for grammatical investigation in Chinese are verbal complements (V-*de*-compl.), verb suffixes (e.g., *-zhe*, *-le*, *-guo*, *-cai*), the role of conjunctions (e.g., *jiu*, *bian*, *nai*), and *wh* constructions. There have been numerous investigations on all of these topics, yet grammar has not been among the more lively areas within the field of Chinese linguistics in North America.

Attempts, however, have been made to inject new ideas into the study of Chinese grammar, such as Huang's (1998) work on the theory of grammar and Audrey Yen-hui Li's (1985) investigations of abstract case. Still, most studies on the grammar of Chinese tend to be descriptive and pragmatic. Discourse grammar, especially of Mandarin, is fairly well represented, as with Hongyin Tao (1993) and Chauncey Chu (1998). Even more elemental are the practical grammars of Hungnin Cheung with Liu and Shih, (1994) and Claudia Ross and Jing-heng Sheng Ma (2006). Chaofen Sun (1988) has promoted the concept of grammaticalization focusing on *de*, *le*, and *ba* and (1996) on historical changes in word order as they relate to grammaticalization. More esoteric projects include Scott McGinnis's (1990) pragmatic analysis of Mandarin utilizing data from modern Taiwan drama. A few studies of early European grammars of Sinitic languages have been carried out, with South Coblin leading the way,

including, for instance, a work by Coblin and Joseph A. Levi (2000), which is a translation of Varo's early-eighteenth-century Mandarin grammar with illuminating commentary.

Despite the fact that grammar lies at the heart of the linguistic study of most languages, it is relatively underdeveloped for Chinese. Without doubt, this is largely the result of uncertainty over how to handle parts of speech in Chinese, as well as the absence of inflection and conjugation. Consequently, much of the energy and attention that are focused on grammatical studies in other languages are shifted to syntax in Chinese (see below).

3. Phonology

If we may say that studies of grammar have gradually emerged as a primary concern of modern Sinitic language studies during the past three decades, then we may say with even more assurance that phonological studies have constituted the core of recent studies on premodern Sinitic.

One of the key figures in the ongoing efforts to refine the seminal work of the Swede Bernhard Karlgren in reconstructing Middle Sinitic and Early Sinitic has been Edwin G. Pulleyblank (1984, 1991). Pulleyblank has written extensively (e.g., 1992) on how to reconstruct Old Sinitic, and others, such as Pang-hsin Ting (1998), have also applied themselves assiduously to the question of the phonological development of Sinitic languages. William Baxter has systematically analyzed the sound system of Chinese, starting with *chongniu* distinctions (1977) and moving back (1991) to the phonology of the Zhou and Han as evidenced in the *Shi jing*. Baxter 1992, later refined in collaboration with Laurent Sagart, is currently considered to be the standard reconstruction of Middle Sinitic and Early Sinitic. Norman (1994) introduced the completely new notion of pharyngealization in Early Sinitic. This drew a spirited response from Pulleyblank (1996).

The debate over the reconstruction of Old Sinitic between Pulleyblank and other scholars culminated in the issuing of a powerful manifesto by Norman and Coblin (1995) in which they declared that they would eschew reconstructions of earlier stages of Sinitic and instead focus their energies on careful studies of individual topolects and topolect groups. It was their intention to make a determined attempt to bring studies of Sinitic historical phonology up to the standards of those in Indo-European studies. One may say that, as a result, a whole school of linguistic research, which I shall call (in emulation of the neogrammarians [*Junggrammatiker*] of the nineteenth century) the neophonologists, arose in Chinese language studies. Showcasing this new approach is David Branner (2006), whose collection of essays downplays the traditional rhyme books in favor of more historical and comparative phonological investigations. Already long before the formal formation of the neophonologists' school, Coblin had tried various means to break out of the conventional reliance on rhyme books and the monolithic, two-stage division of Sinitic into Middle and Ancient (also called Old). One of his main efforts was to use Sanskrit transcriptions and other types of evidence to establish the sound system of the Eastern Han period.

One of the most salient aspects of the neophonologist school is its strong emphasis on the topolects, including reconstruction of their earlier stages, before attempting to specify the sounds of Middle Sinitic and Old Sinitic. Some of the relevant research by the neophonologists and others will be mentioned below in the section on dialectology.

As a historical phonologist, Axel Schuessler (2009) stands somewhere between the Baxter-Sagart school and the neophonologists. Though tied to the latter through his emphasis on historical data outside of the corpora of rhymes and through his attention to massive evidence from non-Sinitic sources, he is methodologically allied with the traditional reconstructionalists.

There have also been other interesting developments in the study of Sinitic phonology during the past thirty years. For instance, San Duanmu (1990) investigated syllable, tone, stress, and domain for the purpose of ascertaining general properties that are shared by all natural varieties of Sinitic. It is noteworthy that Duanmu examined such a wide array of different languages (Mandarin, Shanghai, Meixian [Moi-yan], Amoy, Fuzhou, Cantonese, Changsha, Nanchang, and others). Meanwhile, Matthew Y. Chen (1991, 2000) focused more exclusively on tones across different topolectal boundaries (Tianjin, Xiamen, Wenzhou, Yanggu, etc.), but in his early research (1979, 1980) he also investigated the role of rhythm and metrical structure in poetry.

Much valuable data for the reconstruction of Old Sinitic have been provided by close analysis of the various topolects, for example, Marjorie Chan (1984), who offers evidence for initial consonant clusters in the Yue dialects. Investigations of Sino-Tibetan continue to prove fruitful for the inquiry into the phonology of Old Sinitic. For example, Zev Handel (dissertation, 1998) is a study of the medial systems of Old Sinitic and Proto-Sino-Tibetan; this has recently been published in the monograph series of Academia Sinica as *Old Chinese Medials and Their Sino-Tibetan Origins: A Comparative Study*.

Among numerous other fascinating investigations in Sinitic phonology are Xiao-nan Susan Shen's (1990) study on the prosody of Mandarin, Moira Yip's (1980) inquiry on the phonology of tones, and the essay by Wang and Lien (1993) on bidirectional diffusion in sound change.

In *Visible Speech* (1989), John DeFrancis shows how writing systems all over the world, including Chinese, Egyptian, Sumerian, Akkadian, and Mayan, are inevitably based on phonetic principles. This recognition has also led to a sense of the primacy of sound in Chinese language studies.

Finally, Benjamin Elman (1982), an intellectual historian, has outlined the development of phonology as a discipline in late imperial China.

4. Morphology

Jerome Packard (2000) has greatly advanced the recognition that "words" (and not just "characters") actually exist in Chinese, and that they have a sophisticated internal structure that is describable using extant concepts from the science of linguistics. Packard's work has pushed forward the notion that the psycholinguistic processing (lexical retrieval), word composition, manipulation of syntactic primitives, and so forth of Chinese language in the minds of native speakers are based on the unit "word", as in all other languages, and not based on the unit "character/morpheme," as traditional conceptions would have it. The essays in Packard 1998 move to the fore the discussion of how Chinese words are divorced from character orthography and have a sophisticated and interesting internal structure that is relevant to our understanding of how the language is used, how it is psychologically processed, and how it changes over time.

Although his research on morphology is little known (partly because his early publications are in German), Schuessler (1987 and in the works leading up to that large volume) actually made an enormous

contribution to the study of morphology, already at the stage of Old Sinitic, by demonstrating that Early Zhou Chinese possessed affixes, suffixes, and, indeed, words (not just monosyllabic characters). Pulleyblank (2000) later studied the morphology of Old Sinitic, but his work is not nearly as comprehensive or systematic as that of Schuessler.

Branner (2002) has elaborated the useful concept of “Common Chinese” as it relates to early morphology. This is particularly important because Branner, as a member of the neophonologist school, is able to link his conceptualization of morphology to recent developments in phonology.

5. *Syntax*

A good overall and up-to-date account of the state of the subfield may be found in Huang, Li, and Li 2009. During the 1980s and 1990s, there were scores of studies on such topics as counterfactuals and (zero) anaphora—even stretching back to the analysis of Warring States period texts. The controversy over whether Chinese has counterfactuals, which began with the work of Bloom (1981), was especially intense, and even at times acrimonious. Despite all of the wrangling, which lasted for the better part of two decades, no firm conclusion or consensus has been reached. Anaphora is less contentious, but also less momentous, inasmuch as it is widely recognized as a prominent feature of Chinese speech and writing. Perhaps most surprising is the wide range of materials that have been utilized in its studies, from recipes to menus, from poems to jokes. More soberly, Yan Huang (1994) has looked at anaphora through the dual lens of syntax and pragmatics.

Other favorite topics are the *ba* and *bei* constructions. In the 1990s, discourse analysis (Hsu 1998) and discourse structure (Ho 1993) became popular. Completely new avenues of investigation include that of ergativity and phrase structure, which was discussed by Peter Xinping Zhou (1990). Charles N. Li and Yuzhi Shi (2001) took up the theme of ergativity and phrase structure but extended it to an examination of the relationship between grammaticalization and morphosyntactic, including a diachronic discussion of change since the third century.

A particularly creative contribution is that by Shengli Feng (1995), who has shown how prosody constrains syntax in premodern Chinese. Feng has written a number of books and articles, both in English and in Chinese, on prosodic grammar (*yunlü yufa*) and prosodic syntax (*yunlü jufa*), as well as on interactions among morphology, syntax, and prosody.

One productive approach to the study of syntax has been the use of historical materials, such as the *Lao Qida* (The Old Khitan, i.e., The Old Chinese), which was a Chinese language primer for Korean students produced during the Yuan dynasty. Later translated into Korean, Mongolian, Japanese, and Manchu, it was also redacted several times, reflecting changes in the Chinese language as spoken in northern China over the course of centuries (Wadley 1987). Derek Herforth (1994) goes back still farther in time to investigate the nature of conditionals in Old Sinitic.

Most studies of syntax, however, have been on its manifestations in modern Sinitic languages, especially Mandarin. Feng-fu Tsao (1990) examines the functional aspects of sentence and clause structure. McCawley (1994) explicates yes-no questions in Mandarin. Christensen (1990) has studied perfective and inchoative aspect in Mandarin, as well as the differences in spoken and written syntax (1994). Audrey Li (1990) looks at order and constituency in Mandarin. Yuanjian He (1996) explores

government binding as applied to Chinese syntax. James H-Y. Tai (1985, 1993) investigates iconicity and temporal sequence as they pertain to word order, while Chan and Tai (1995) used verbalization as a means of clarifying syntactical function.

Fuller (1999) has written a textbook introduction to Literary Sinitic that emphasizes syntactical relationships.

6. Sociolinguistics

This is a large subfield, inasmuch as it includes language contact, planning, and reform, as well as a variety of other concerns having to do with language and society, politics, and so forth.

As he was the doyen of Chinese language teachers during the last half century and more, so was John DeFrancis the father of serious research on Chinese language reform. His most important work on the latter subject goes back more than six decades, but he continued to work on current, related issues right up to his death in 2009. Among the numerous books and papers DeFrancis wrote on this subject was an article (2006) that both surveyed the past and looked to the future.

Next to DeFrancis, the most important researcher on Chinese language reform in North America during the past three decades has been John Rohsenow. It was Rohsenow who was asked by the State Language Commission to translate the official rules for Mandarin Romanized Orthography (1990). Rohsenow also wrote an essential survey (1996) of the *zhuyin shixi, tiqian duxie* (recognize characters through phonetic annotation, speed up reading and writing) program (commonly known as the “Z.T. experiment”), described (2001b) the emergence of digraphia (*shuangwenzhi*), and surveyed (2004) half a century of script and language reform that resulted in the Language Law of 2001.

The concept of digraphia has also come up in the study of loanwords in Chinese, since there are presently no orthographic rules and regulations governing the way words are borrowed. The adoption of a policy of digraphia is one means whereby word borrowing could be made more rational, although other possibilities include the emergence of an exclusive loanword syllabary and the establishment of explicit lexical categories for specific borrowing strategies (Wiener 2009).

William Hannas (1997) has produced an excellent comparative study of language reform in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. The author knows all of the relevant languages (including their topolects) intimately and has a sharp, analytical mind, so his findings are highly reliable.

Minglang Zhou (2003, 2004) has investigated the changing nature and status of dialects in China, the varieties of Putonghua, and the relationship between language policy and state building. More recently he has begun to focus on such questions as the comparison of affirmative action education in China and the United States, minority language education, bilingual and multilingual education, and related topics.

Ling-Yu Lu (1994) has investigated the use of English verbs in Chinese sentences and studied the incorporation of English words and grammatical patterns in Mandarin, Cantonese, and other topolects—sometimes as ad hoc code-switching, sometimes as more permanently incorporated features that are too numerous to mention in this brief survey.

Bjorn H. Jernudd (1986) edited two special issues of sociological and anthropological journals on language contact and language planning. The studies in these two issues and numerous other

publications show clearly how difficult it is to isolate language from nonlinguistic consideration. Indeed, Robert Sanders (1986) has shown that sociolinguistic factors even play a significant role in grammatical usage. Thus Ping Chen (1999) is able to weave together history and sociolinguistics from the late nineteenth century to the 1990s, and Fengyuan Ji (2004) rightly emphasizes the intimate intertwining of language and politics during the Cultural Revolution, while Michael Schoenhals (1992) dissects the linguistic aspects of politics in modern China.

Partly because mainland China was not accessible for research until the mid- to late 1980s, and partly because of its intrinsic mix of Mandarin, Hoklo (Taiwanese), Hakka, and aboriginal languages, the linguistic situation on Taiwan has been a subject of research for many students and scholars of Chinese linguistics. Cornelius Charles Kubler (1981) carried out a very interesting study on the importance of language contact for the development of Mandarin in Taiwan. Jia-Ling Hsu (1994) has investigated the Englishization of Taiwan Mandarin. Wi-vun Taiffalo Chiung (1999) has carried out extremely revealing surveys concerning the attitudes of people on Taiwan toward written Taiwanese (whether it should/can be written at all, and, if so, whether to use Chinese characters, the roman alphabet, national phonetic symbols [*bopomofo*], some other type of symbols, or a combination of elements from different writing systems). Chiung (2003) went on to investigate the efficiency of Chinese characters and Vietnamese romanization in learning language and discovered that Vietnamese is far more efficient than Chinese characters.

A number of researchers have investigated gender issues as they pertain to various aspects of language in society and culture. Ettner, for example (1993), has addressed the matter of sexism and language planning, while David Moser (1997) has looked at covert sexism in Mandarin.

Questions of literacy and the innate difficulty of *hanzi* continue to attract researchers. Naturally, these include the perennial debates over traditional versus simplified forms of the characters, and the characters versus Hanyu Pinyin (romanization). Now that pinyin has become more solidly ensconced in Chinese society, in no small measure because of the ubiquity of computers and short text messaging on cell phones, for which it is overwhelmingly the favored input system, there is a heightened concern with questions of proper orthography (word division, capitalization, and other aspects of punctuation, proper names on maps and street signs, etc.). For all such issues pertaining to romanization, the most important source for current research and breaking news is Mark Swofford's research website. In recent years, one of the most exciting topics related to pinyin has been the idea that there is an emerging digraphia in China, and a number of North American researchers—including John DeFrancis, John Rohsenow, Zhang Liqing, and Victor H. Mair—have paid due regard to this vital phenomenon. Zhang Liqing has been at the forefront of using pinyin for creative writing and other practical applications in real life.

Related to digraphia (the simultaneous use of two writing systems in a society for different purposes or in different contexts) is the phenomenon of diglossia (the use of two different languages in a society for different purposes or in different contexts). Of course, this has all along been an important issue in China because of the relationship between the national language (*guoyu*, *putonghua*) and local languages (both Sinitic and non-Sinitic). But the emergence of English as a de facto second national (or perhaps it would be better to say “international”) language in China has radically transformed the diglossic landscape. Among the countless manifestations of the powerful roles that English has come

to play in China, one of the most obvious is its use in e-mail (whether integrally or intermittently) by Chinese speakers. All of these issues are current and rapidly changing, but North American scholars are keeping abreast of them as well as researchers anywhere in the world.

All manner of specialized issues pertaining to script reform, romanization, and so on have been addressed by various North American scholars during the past thirty years. Among these are Jay Lundelius (1991), who has investigated the effectiveness of tonal spelling as a pedagogical device; Paul King (1983), who has studied the importance of context in pinyin writing; and Clément Arsenault (2000), who has done empirical research on the usefulness of proper word division for the bibliographic entry and retrieval of library records.

One of the most intriguing essays pertaining to sociolinguistics is Mary Erbaugh's (2002) study on the use of polite expressions that have arisen in contemporary society, in particular those that are used with strangers. Erbaugh demonstrates that most of the expressions now commonly used for such purposes were borrowed from foreign languages.

7. Lexicography and Lexicology

The best place to begin for understanding the state of this subfield three decades ago is to consult Paul Fu-mien Yang's (1985) bibliography of Chinese lexicology and lexicography. There is also the bibliography of Chinese dictionaries compiled by Mathias, Creamer, and Hixon (1982), which is helpful. During the intervening period, tremendous strides have been taken, and the state of the field of Chinese lexicology and lexicography in North America during the past three decades is one of which we can be justly proud.

In numerous publications and online writings, Michael Carr has been the most active scholar who focuses on Chinese lexicography and lexicology per se. He often combines his interest in dictionaries and Internet resources with extremely detailed studies of particular words or groups of words (e.g., 1990) with a strong sinological bent.

Federico Masini (1993) has studied the formation of the modern Chinese lexicon. Mark Hansell (1989) has investigated lexical borrowing in Taiwan. Proverbs and folk similes were given professional treatment by John Rohsenow (1991, 2001a). There are also highly specialized works, such as Dale Johnson's (2000) little known but useful glossary of vernacular and non-Sinitic expressions in the oral performing arts of the Jin, Yuan, and Ming periods. Such projects can take decades to prepare, but their value for other researchers makes them worth all the effort expended. Another example of this type of research is South Coblin's (2006) study of the Spanish-Mandarin glossary written by Francesco Varo (1627–87), which is of great value for the study of early Mandarin.

There are, as well, more theoretical approaches to the Chinese lexicon, such as lexical diffusion, which was already a hot topic before the period covered by this essay. Marjorie Chan (1983) revisits earlier studies on this subject and strives to move it forward to new levels of understanding.

Arguably the most important development in Chinese lexicography of the last three decades was the creation of the ABC Chinese-English dictionary series at the University of Hawai'i Press. The ABC dictionaries adopt a single-sort alphabetic ordering by words (*w*) instead of characters (*z*) as in conventional dictionaries (compare the discussions under "Morphology" above and "Computational

Linguistics and Psycholinguistics” below). This extremely user-friendly arrangement has many advantages, including easy and fast lookup, ability to find words that one knows how to pronounce but not how to write, and advanced computational applications for sorting and searching. The ABC dictionaries have many other advanced features that are missing in other dictionaries, such as indication of frequency, part of speech, pinyin for all entries and all example sentences, tone sandhi, and so on.

Three of the most significant Chinese dictionaries (two of which are in the ABC series) published within the last three decades were singlehandedly compiled by Axel Schuessler (1987, 2007, 2009). However, since they have major implications for other subfields (phonology, morphology, and etymology), they are treated under those headings.

Although we have much to be grateful for when it comes to Chinese lexicography and lexicology of the last thirty years, there are two glaring gaps: (1) the lack of a good bilingual (Chinese-English) dictionary for the study of Literary Sinitic (i.e., Classical Chinese); and (2) the absence of a reliable dictionary that incorporates the new knowledge that has become available as a result of research on the oracle bone inscriptions, bronze inscriptions, seal script, writings on archaeologically recovered bamboo and silk manuscripts, and so on (I call this dictionary the *New Shuowen Jiezi*). I have some hope that the latter lacuna will be filled within five years, but a solution for the former deficiency will require a great deal of planning, organization, and funding. I should note that Gilbert Mattos spent the last years of his life laboring on a dictionary of Literary Sinitic, but it was more than one man could do in such a relatively short period of time.

8. *Dialectology and Taxonomy (Classification and Genealogy)*

As with lexicology and lexicography, the best place to begin for understanding the state of this subfield three decades ago is to consult Paul Fu-mien Yang’s (1981) bibliography of Chinese dialectology.

One of the most serious problems in the study of Chinese linguistics is the loose usage of the term *dialect* and the lack of a clear understanding of whether there is only one Chinese language or many. This imprecise usage of the notion of “dialect” with regard to Sinitic languages plays havoc with the scientific classification and history of Sinitic and its branches. In an attempt to obviate these obstacles to taxonomical exactitude, Mair (1991) coined the word *topolect* as a way to neutralize the mistranslation of *fangyan* as “dialect.” Mair (in press) goes beyond his earlier effort to clarify taxonomical terminology by confronting the concept of *hanyu* and by examining it from synchronic and diachronic angles.

Few linguists would deny that China is home to one of the most complex linguistic landscapes of any nation on earth, yet there is a popular misconception that most people in China speak and write the identical language, and that this language (and the script used to write it) has been similarly unified throughout thousands of years of history. It is only recently that scholars have begun to look more critically at these assumptions. One of the reasons that linguists have begun to be willing to question the monolithic nature of “Chinese” is the fact that historians, anthropologists, literary theorists, and others have lately subjected such notions as *hanzu* (the Han nation or race) and *Zhongguo* (the Central Kingdom) to minute dissection.

Given the protean nature of this subfield, its supreme importance for understanding the true nature of the Sinitic language group, and the number of researchers it has attracted, in the following

paragraphs I shall be able to do little more than list some of the most outstanding research results under a series of rubrics, starting with more general and theoretical questions and moving toward specific topolects.

If we admit that China is blessed with linguistic diversity, then it is natural for a scientifically curious mind to try to comprehend the relationships among the plethora of languages it possesses. These are the very questions that preoccupied William S-Y. Wang throughout most of his long career. Wang (1995) grapples with the ancestry of Sinitic, discusses (1991b, 1997) the relationship between languages and dialects, and (1998) uses genetics, archaeology, and linguistics in an effort to determine the linkages among various Sinitic and non-Sinitic languages in China, from the earliest stages of different groups in the East Asian Heartland and Extended East Asian Heartland. In one of his most influential essays (1996), Wang concentrates on linguistic diversity and language relationships.

One of the main indices of whether two different forms of speech are separate languages or dialects of a single language is mutual intelligibility. Although it is widely recognized that a high degree of mutual unintelligibility indicates that two speech forms constitute separate languages, it has been difficult to measure the degree of understanding, or lack thereof. Chin-chuan Cheng (1996), for example, has made major contributions to the quantification of mutual intelligibility.

Some of the most exciting work in topolect studies has to do with the identification of substrate languages, Robert Stuart Bauer (1996) being a good example of this type of research. There is room, however, for a great deal more of such investigation for virtually all of the Sinitic topolects.

Yan 2006 is a comprehensive account of studies on Chinese topolects, from Yang Xiong's *Fangyan* to contemporary works, covering mainly phonological and lexical features.

In terms of extra-Sinitic genetic linkages, it has been customary to connect Chinese with Tibetan. Near the beginning of his professional career, Coblin was one of the most ardent proponents of research on Sino-Tibetan, and he even published (1986) a very handy manual of Sino-Tibetan lexical correspondences. By the mid-1990s, however, he had turned his attention to dialectal, lexicographical, and early vernacular matters. Coblin's (1986, 1991) studies on Old Northwest Sinitic presaged his later attention to regional vernaculars and historical data outside of the rhyme books. He then wrote (2000) a capsule history of Mandarin and later (2002) authored a stimulating study of the impact of migration on the development of dialects in the lower Yangtze region.

Studies on Sino-Tibetan sometimes reach beyond to larger Eurasian connections (Bauer 1994), and Altaic influences on Pekingese have been investigated by various researchers (Wadley 1996). Correspondences with non-Sinitic East and Southeast Asian languages, such as Bai (Minjia), have been used to reconstruct an ancestral stage of Sinitic (Wiersma 1990). Tai and Chan (1998) have shown that periodization is relevant for dialectology. Ting and Yue-Hashimoto (2000) have studied linguistic change and dialects, Ting (1982) has investigated tonal development in various dialects, and Yue-Hashimoto (1993) has described what she calls comparative dialectal grammar. Lexical diffusion of tone systems across dialects has been studied by Chinfa Lien (1987) and others.

Moving on to research on specific topolects, Jeffrey Crossland (1999) has investigated semantic change, focusing on the comparative in Amoy. Maureen Bek-ng Lee (1998) has analyzed Teochew intonation, and Lee Lily Chan (1998) has studied tone sandhi in Fuzhou, while Marjorie Chan (1985) has undertaken nonlinear analysis of stress and tone in Fuzhou phonology.

Of all the topolects, Southern Min has been relatively well studied by North American scholars because of the accessibility of Taiwan, and Cantonese has been especially well studied because of the openness of Hong Kong. Ting Pang-hsin has carried out studies of both contemporary (1999) and historical (1983) aspects of Min, for example, attempting to determine when colloquial Min derived from Old Sinitic. Robert Bauer (1982, 1997, 2002, and many other publications) has investigated the phonology, lexicon, and writing system of Cantonese. Complementing Bauer's research, Virginia Yip and Stephen Matthews (2000, 2001; also Matthews and Yip 1994) have compiled exhaustive grammars of Cantonese, concentrating on the language, not the writing system. Donald Snow (2004) has described the development of Cantonese as a written language; if the use of written Cantonese ever became widespread, it would be of monumental significance (the same is true for any other of the topolects, such as Taiwanese) since only Literary Sinitic and Mandarin have ever developed a fully functioning written form. Marjorie Chan (1980) has conducted a massive synchronic and diachronic analysis of Zhongshan dialect. Dana Bourgerie (1990) has examined sociolinguistic variation in Cantonese.

Richard Simmons (1999a) has published a descriptive and comparative study of Hangzhou topolect, with attention to its historical implications. Simmons (1999b) has also edited a collection of essays that deal with the taxonomical issues of topolects. The work of Simmons belongs squarely within the neophonologist school and is a good example of the direction its members wish to take toward the reconstruction of earlier stages of Sinitic.

Not only has the problem of dialects/topolects been studied with regard to Cantonese, Taiwanese, Shanghainese, Hangzhou, and so forth, but Mandarin dialects have also received a great deal of attention (e.g., Baxter 2006). In a fascinating essay, Li (1995) discusses the possibility of Mandarin having derived from a pidgin. Finally, Gunn (2006) has written an important book on the use of nonstandard (i.e., non-Mandarin) Sinitic languages in the media.

9. *Grammatology (Writing Systems)*

Considering the unique nature of the writing system, this is naturally one of the most active subfields within the study of Chinese linguistics. While there are many unanswered questions about the origins and nature of the sinographs, the work of William Boltz (1999, 1996) is generally regarded as the best theoretical account of the early development of the script. David N. Keightley (1989) also has stimulating proposals concerning the earliest stages of the writing system. Xigui Qiu (2000) has produced an excellent descriptive account of the earliest stages of the Chinese writing system; the translation of Qiu's book into English, by Jerry Norman and Gil Mattos, is an impressive achievement in its own right. Kwong-yue Cheung (1983) surveyed the archaeological evidence for the early script. Adam Smith (2008) has investigated the relationship between divination records and early Chinese literacy. The preeminent North American scholar in actually reading, translating, and interpreting the oracle bone inscriptions has been Ken-ichi Takashima (Takashima and Matsumara 1994, Takahima and Itō 1996, Takashima and Matsumara 2000, Takashima, Zhinji, and Deshao 2005). Mattos (1988) offers a detailed description of early writing on stone. Branner and Li (2010) have made the first attempt to assess literacy in ancient China.

In an effort to clear up a common misperception about the nature of Chinese characters, DeFrancis (1989, esp. chap. 3) offers an astute comparison with other writing systems of the world; he proves that no script capable of recording the full range of linguistic expressions can be purely pictographic or ideographic; this is a theme that has been wittily and persuasively revisited by Unger (2004). The work of DeFrancis and Unger is corroborated by that of Richard Horodeck (1987), who has shown that sound plays a prominent role in the reading and writing of Chinese characters. In other words, there is no direct, “pure” transmission of meaning as is sometimes thought in the popular imagination.

In numerous essays, Mair (e.g., 2001) has emphasized the difference between language and script and elucidated their respective impact on Chinese culture and society. Mair 1996 is a brief introduction to the modern writing system. Binyong Yin and John Rohsenow 1994 is a thorough introduction to the modern forms of the characters. Mark Hansell (1989) and Helena Riha (2008) show how “lettered words” (*ximuci*, i.e., words composed of roman letters instead of characters) have become an integral part of the Chinese writing system. Erbaugh 2002 is an entertaining and informative examination of various problems concerning the “difficult characters” in China and Japan. There has been considerable interest in Women’s Script (*nǚshu*), with several dissertations written about it and a number of documentaries featuring it. The principle behind it is the same as that which led to the creation of the *kana* syllabaries in Japan. Unfortunately, Women’s Script never expanded beyond a small group of villages around Jiangyong County in the far southwest of Hunan Province.

When all of the non-Sinitic languages of China are taken into account, there are many other writing systems besides the Chinese characters. The most important research on a non-Sinitic script during the last three decades in North America is Coblin’s (2007) dictionary (with lengthy introduction) of the ’Phags-pa script.

10. Etymology and Semantics

Although it has been customary for laypersons and scholars alike to refer to the explanations of characters in the *Shuowen jiezi* as being etymological in nature, in actuality they are not. What the *Shuowen jiezi* and all later works in that tradition do is to dissect the characters and analyze their various components: shape, sound, and meaning (*xing, yin, yi*). Consequently, we may say that one of the biggest breakthroughs in Chinese linguistics of the last thirty years in North America, and indeed in Chinese linguistics throughout the world in the last two thousand years, was the publication of Axel Schuessler’s *ABC Etymological Dictionary of Old Chinese* (2007). This was the first genuine, comprehensive attempt to analyze the etymologies of the basic lexicon of early Sinitic words in history.

Semantics has not been a particularly active subfield in North American studies on Chinese linguistics during the past three decades and more. Among the few works featuring it are those of Biq (1984), who combines semantics and pragmatics, and Teng (1975), who conducts a semantic investigation of transitivity.

11. Philology

Inasmuch as philology and linguistics are both centered on exacting research involving language, they are related. On the other hand, philology always has one eye on culture, whereas linguistics is

concerned solely with language per se. Furthermore, philology—which may rely on and incorporate useful aspects of linguistics—is more closely linked to sinology (*hanxue*) than linguistics. Hence, the major concerns of philology are treated elsewhere in this volume, and it is also for this reason that traditional Chinese language studies (*xiaoxue*) are not discussed in this essay. Here I shall mention only that Elman (1984) documents the shift from philosophy to philology, a dramatic transformation that took place in the context of late imperial evidential scholarship (*kaozhengxue*), which in turn was heavily influenced by Jesuit (and other European) learning.

12. Computational Linguistics

During the last thirty years, there have been countless studies on machine translation and other aspects of computational linguistics, many of them carried out by engineers, computer scientists, and others who are not primarily engaged in Chinese studies or sinology. C. C. Cheng does focus primarily on Chinese language issues and has employed computational models in his discussion of language cognition, especially with regard to vocabulary size. His interest has been mainly in the number of linguistic symbols one can handle and not exceed brain “storage.” Cheng’s research (e.g., 2002) shows that the number of linguistic symbols humans can handle is about eight thousand.

Mair and Liu convened one of the first academic conferences on computer applications for research on Chinese linguistics and cultural studies. The most important papers delivered at the conference were published in *Characters and Computers* (1991).

More esoteric research in this subfield includes Daniel Radzinski’s (1990) study of the mathematics of grammatical constructions and Roderick Gammon’s (2002) dissertation on linguistic theory and software engineering.

13. Psycholinguistics, Neurolinguistics, and the Biological Bases of Language

In psycholinguistics, in general, the work of Ovid Tzeng and Daisy Hong has made the greatest impact. Overall, the major finding in this subfield has been recognition of the existence of “phonological recoding” in Chinese. Phonological recoding is the extent to which the centers of the brain related to the processing of sound are activated when the reading of Chinese occurs. The received wisdom used to be that Chinese directly accessed meaning rather than going through a phonological route. Although some researchers (e.g., Charles Perfetti and Li Hai Tan) continue to stress the activation of semantics (meaning) in Chinese, Tzeng and many other leading psycholinguists maintain that phonology is more strongly activated.

As for children learning to read Chinese, probably the most significant finding of the past three decades is the primary role of morphological awareness, as compared to phonological awareness, in reading alphabetic languages.

In the psycholinguistics of Chinese morphology, it has been shown that language processing in speakers of Chinese is word driven rather than morpheme or character driven.

In the psycholinguistics of grammar/syntax, perhaps the best work has been performed by Ping Li at the University of Richmond. Li has made many important discoveries in psycholinguistics having to do with how words and sentences are processed in Chinese.

In Chinese neurolinguistics, probably the most significant finding has been the left-hemisphere lateralization of lexical tone as compared to the (usually) right lateralization of musical/nonlinguistic tone. The literature on all of these subjects is vast and scattered in numerous highly specialized psychological, neurological, and medical journals. The best single reference for someone who wishes to gain an overview of the most important recent research results is Ping Li et al. 2006.

Hsuan-chih Chen and Ovid Tzeng (1992) have provided an accessible introduction to the processing of Chinese. Chen (1997) and Wang, Inhoff, and Chen (1999) deal with the cognitive analysis of Chinese script. Tzeng et al. (1979) describe the process of visual lateralization in reading Chinese characters. Tzeng and colleagues (1977, 1978, 1986, 1988) have studied the relationship between brain function and orthography, reading, information processing, and speech recoding. Roberto Ong (1990) has studied the morphological and syntactic deficits in patients suffering from aphasia. Rumjahn Hoosain (1991) investigates linguistic relativity as reflected in psycholinguistic studies of Chinese. Jerome Packard (1986, 1993, Packard, Li, and Gaffney 2002) has investigated various aspects of psycholinguistics as they pertain to the concept of “word” in Chinese.

William Hannas’s (2003) *The Writing on the Wall* is hard to classify. It could equally well go under several other categories, especially sociolinguistics. Since, however, it is heavily focused on psycholinguistic questions of the relationship between language and creativity, I have put it here. Also worthy of consideration is David Moser’s (1996) work on abstract thought.

Charles Li and J. M. Hombert (2002) delve into the matter of the evolution of the brain and the origin of language.

There has been tremendous excitement over recent findings that demonstrate how dyslexia in Chinese is different from dyslexia in alphabetical languages. The most important work on this subject has been carried out by an international team under the leadership of Perfetti (Siok et al. 2008).

Conclusion

Although some of the research done on Chinese language and linguistics in North America during the past three decades covers old ground or reflects essentially personal interests and experience, a considerable proportion is genuinely exciting and often may be said to be “cutting edge” in nature. Among the areas where significant breakthroughs have been made are etymology, software development for automatic language processing (including translation), corpus linguistics, the relationship between language and thought, and morphology. Judging from recent research efforts, we can expect that the next thirty years will bring equally impressive results in such areas as the classification of Sinitic languages (both internally and externally), the relationship of Sinitic to other language families and groups, the standardization and codification of Chinese characters, the origins and development of the script, literacy, the nature of “word” in Chinese, the impact of the Internet and World Wide Web on the development of language usage, language mixing, grammaticalization, bleaching, and many other significant topics.

The general trajectory of studies on Chinese linguistics in North America during the past half century and more has followed essentially this pattern: in the 1950s and earlier, most scholars were natives of the United States and Canada, or immigrants from Europe; in the 1960s and 1970s, many

graduate students came from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, and elsewhere in Asia to receive their training in North America and to locate here as teachers and researchers; and from the 1980s until the present time, the number of graduate students from mainland China (People's Republic of China) has grown larger with each passing year, although students from Taiwan and Europe have continued to come to North America for their advanced degrees. From the 1990s onward, more and more scholars trained in the United States and Canada have opted to return to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China for long-term employment. The result is that Chinese linguistics has gradually become a unified global phenomenon, with scholars worldwide collaborating on a common set of aims and utilizing similar analytical techniques and methodologies. The earlier pattern of parallel tracks employing different research strategies directed toward dissimilar goals has given way to a universal body of assumptions, methods, and objectives.

Notes

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¹ Another important scholar whose works are not discussed in the survey is Mantaro Hashimoto. In the period just before the cutoff point for this volume, Hashimoto was doing pathbreaking, innovative research in various directions but most impressively on the subject of the Altaicization of northern Sinitic. Unfortunately, his life was tragically cut short just when he was reaching the apogee of his creativity.

² Among the many important pedagogical linguists, textbook authors, and classroom instructors who have been influential in Chinese language teaching during the past thirty years are Shou-Hsin Teng, Ronald Walton, Cynthia Ning, Hongming Zhang, and Jianhua Bai. Several of the most influential pedagogues were trained under Eleanor Jordan at Cornell University, and one of her students, Galal Walker, has gone on to train many other talented language teachers at Ohio State University. There are countless other dedicated and talented professionals who have contributed to the flourishing of Chinese language teaching in North America. A good indication of their seriousness of purpose and scholarly activities may be found in the *Journal of the Chinese Language Teachers Association*, on the CLTA website (<http://clta-us.org>), and also by visiting the CHINESE Listserv at Kenyon College (<http://www2.kenyon.edu/Depts/Mll/Chinese/>), which is dedicated to Chinese language teaching issues.

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Chinese Music: Graduate Training, Resources, and Publication

Bell Yung

Introduction

Chinese music is a relatively new topic of teaching and research at North American universities. It has long been considered a subcategory of musical studies and finds its home mainly in music departments. Within those departments, it is subsumed under the discipline of ethnomusicology, which itself became an established field in American academia only in the 1950s. (Although the definitions of the term are varied and continue to evolve, it generally covers all categories of music other than the European classical tradition). At the same time, the study of Chinese music is also very much a part of sinology, with close intellectual links to the study of Chinese history, theater, anthropology, folklore, linguistics, and other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Thus Chinese musicology in North America straddles the two academic disciplines of music and sinology, benefiting from the intellectual trends and research methodologies of each. This essay aims to provide an introduction to the teaching of, research on, and resources for Chinese music in North America.¹

Graduate Training

In 1969, Han Kuo-huang published a list of graduate theses on Chinese music from North America and Europe, among which only a handful are significant works. Two decades later Theodore J. Kwok updated the list of graduate theses, showing that the number had increased greatly (Kwok 1994). Among the earliest theses in Han's list was one by Bliss M. Wiant of the Peabody Conservatory of Music (1946), but the most influential is probably the study of Song dynasty (or "Song" in the romanization system used by the author) musical sources by Rulan Chao Pian of Harvard University in 1960, which when published (1967) won the prestigious Otto Kinkeldey Award of the American Musicological Society as the best musicological monograph that year, thus establishing Chinese music research as a serious subject in both music history and sinology. Pian's work combined Western musicological and sinological research methods, and was codirected by John Ward, a European music historian, and Lien-sheng Yang, a Chinese literary historian. Pian was for many years a professor in both the Department of Music and the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, anticipating the dual nature of Chinese music research; she was among the first to offer courses on Chinese music, and, besides her celebrated monograph, she published widely on Peking Opera and various kinds of narrative songs. She trained a number of graduate students in the two departments, of whom the earliest included Catherine Stevens writing on Peking Drum Song

(1972), Bell Yung on Cantonese Opera (1976a), and Robert Provine on fifteenth-century state ritual music in Korea (1979).

The 1970s was the first really productive decade for doctoral dissertations. Besides Harvard, the University of California, Los Angeles, began offering courses on Chinese music in the 1960s taught by the noted qin and pipa master Tsun-yuen Lui, who assisted in the supervision of doctoral dissertations by David M. Liang on qin playing technique (1973), Marjory Bong-ray Liu on Kun Opera (1976), and Frederic Lieberman on the qin handbook *Mei'an Qinpu* (1977). Dissertations from other universities include those of Fu-yen Chen on Confucian ceremonial music in Taiwan (1976), Ronald Riddle on music in San Francisco's Chinatown (1976), Alice Yu on the relationship between language and music in songs (1977), Alan Kagan on Cantonese rod-puppet theater (1978), Patricia Haseltine on Taiwanese folk theater (1979), and Alan Thrasher on ethics and aesthetics in ancient music (1980).

Most of the graduates listed above began teaching in universities to continue the training of the next generation of researchers. For example, Stevens taught at the University of Toronto; Liang at the University of British Columbia and later the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; Yung at the University of Pittsburgh; Lieberman at Brown University, then the University of Washington, and later the University of California, Santa Cruz; Provine at the University of Durham, UK, and later at the University of Maryland, College Park; Kagan at the University of Minnesota; Thrasher at the University of British Columbia; and Riddle at New College of the University of South Florida.

The 1980s saw the emergence of a new generation of doctoral graduates, with dissertations by Loh (1982), Wichmann (1983), Tong (1983), Yeh (1985), Chan (1986), Myers (1987), Witzleben (1987), Lam (1988), T. Liu (1988), Tuohy (1988), D. Ferguson (1988), F. Ferguson (1988), Tsao (1989), and Wu (1990). After the opening of the People's Republic of China in the late 1970s, ethnographic research on the mainland became possible, which produced work on topics such as Peking Opera (Beijing Opera) in Nanjing, Jiangnan Sizhu ensemble music in Shanghai, Cantonese Opera in Guangzhou, narrative songs in Tianjin, and Hua'er songs in the northwest. A few of these graduates returned to the mainland, Taiwan, or Hong Kong to teach, while others stayed in North American institutions and further developed courses on Chinese music and supervised graduate students. An informal count shows that there are about fifteen music departments with Chinese music specialists on their faculties in North America today (*specialists* here is loosely defined as those who have published scholarly articles or books). Chinese music has been firmly established as an important part of ethnomusicology and sinology. An illuminating discussion comparing academic training in North America and Hong Kong is found in J. Lawrence Witzleben's article on the meaning of ethnomusicology in these two locales (1997).

Resources

Scholarly Organizations and Journals

Two mainstream organizations that attract scholars in Chinese music are the Society for Ethnomusicology and the Association for Asian Studies, both of which hold annual meetings in North American cities, where papers on Chinese music are delivered. The North American scholarly organization dedicated exclusively to Chinese music is the Association for Chinese Music Research (ACMR), which was

formed in 1986 and holds annual meetings in conjunction with the Society for Ethnomusicology as a platform for reports and discussion on the latest research projects. It published the refereed journal *ACMR Reports* between 1995 and 2000) and continues to publish the *ACMR Newsletter* (begun in 1987, now online). The current president is Fredrick Lau of the University of Hawai'i. Also worth mentioning is the Conference on Chinese Oral and Performing Literature (CHINOPERL), which was established in 1969 by noted linguist and composer Yuen Ren Chao and others. Its members are specialists in a wide variety of disciplines: music, linguistics, theater, literature, history, anthropology, sociology, and so on. It holds annual meetings in conjunction with the Association for Asian Studies and since 1975 has published the journal *Chinoperl Papers*, which developed out of *Chinoperl News* (1969–75). The current president is Wenwei Du of Vassar College; the journal editor is David Rolston of the University of Michigan.

North American-based music journals that are not dedicated to China but occasionally publish articles on Chinese topics include *Ethnomusicology*, *Asian Music*, and *Popular Music*. Nonmusic journals include *Modern China*, *Journal of Ritual Studies*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, and others. Worth mentioning are English-language music journals published outside North America that are widely consulted by North American scholars, such as *World of Music*, *Musical Quarterly*, *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, *Ethnomusicology Forum* (previously titled *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*), and *CHIME* (journal of the European Foundation for Chinese Music Research).

Bibliographical Resources, Dictionaries, and Textbooks

The earliest compilation is by Frederic Lieberman (1970). It has about 1,500 entries and includes journalistic short pieces as well as scholarly works. Alan Thrasher's 1993 compilation of about 600 entries includes scholarly publications in non-Chinese languages as well as selected Chinese-language historical sources. In addition to the list of dissertations by Kwok mentioned above, between 1996 and 2000 the annual *ACMR Reports* listed non-Chinese-language research publications, compiled by Sue Tuohy. In 2002 Su Zheng compiled a list of about 130 scholarly publications since 1911 in Chinese and other languages. More comprehensive is the bibliography put together by Frederick Lau in the East Asia volume (vol. 7) of the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (2001).

This is limited to non-Chinese-language publications dating from 1911. The 400 or so entries comprise mainly English-language works but also a small number in German and French; the places of publication include North America, Europe, Australia, and Hong Kong. Most recently, *ACMR Newsletter* has produced a bibliography of English-language publications since 1997 (Bryant et al. 2009) and regularly updates the list in each semiannual issue. In addition, there are a few specialized bibliographies such as Ben Wu's compilation on Tibetan music (1998a) and Helen Rees's on narrative songs (1991).

Several music dictionaries published in recent years contain substantial writings on Chinese music, including *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd edition (Sadie 2001), *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 4th edition (Randel 2003), and the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, vol. 7 (Provine et al. 2002). The last is the most comprehensive, consisting of more than forty articles in three-hundred-plus pages, written by scholars from both China and elsewhere. In addition, several textbooks on world

music feature a chapter on China. Authors include Kuo-huang Han and Lindy Li Mark in May 1980, Alan Thrasher in H. Myers 1993, William Malm in Malm 1996, Terry Miller in Miller and Shahriari 2005, Isabel Wong in Nettl et al. 2008, and Jonathan Stock in Titon et al. 2009. Two other textbook-level publications are dedicated entirely to China, those by David Liang (1985) and Frederick Lau (2008a). Also worthy of mention is Isabel Wong's overview of Chinese musicology in the twentieth century (1991).

Research and Publications²

Early Writings

Rulan Chao Pian's monograph on Song dynasty musical sources (1967), mentioned above, is a pioneering work on Chinese music history. Two others deserve mention here, even though they were not initially published in North America. *Foundations of Chinese Musical Art*, by John H. Levis (1936, 1964), is one of the first books in English on the subject and among the earliest to focus on Chinese linguistic tones. It received considerable attention at the time but is seldom cited today. The second is *The Lore of the Chinese Lute*, by Robert van Gulik (1940, 1969), a Dutch sinologist, diplomat, translator, and mystery writer. As the first English-language work to cite extensive primary Chinese source materials on the seven-string zither qin, this book's rigorous scholarship continues to be a touchstone for serious students of Chinese music.

Early scholars often focused on music philosophy and theory, based on their reading of the classics. Joseph Needham's monumental seven-volume *Science and Civilization in China* (1954) contains one of the first discussions of musical scales and intonation, under the heading "Acoustics" (within the section "Physics and Physical Technology"). Among others who wrote on theory was Fritz A. Kuttner, a German national who lived in Shanghai for ten years beginning in 1939, where he studied the language and music, and who taught Western music at St. John's University from 1943 to 1945. After immigrating to the United States, he published a series of articles on the Chinese chromatic scale, pre-Qin music, Zhu Zaiyu's equal-tempered chromatic scale, musical sources in the classic *Huainanzhi*, and music archaeology (1964, etc.). Theoretical studies also include the investigation of the relationship between melody and linguistic tones (Mark and Li 1966) and heterophony (Mok 1966). Alan Kagan was the first to examine post-1949 music (1963) and pioneered later studies on the relationship between music and politics. Adolphe C. Scott introduced Peking Opera to the English reader by translating a number of scripts with detailed stage directions (1957, 1967), and Tsun-yuen Lui was the first to discuss the tablature notation and performance technique of qin music (1966, 1968).

The 1970s saw the emergence of several important scholars, including Kuo-huang Han, who writes in English (1978, etc.) and Chinese, and the Australian Colin Mackerras, who produced a series of studies of theater, in particular the social history of Peking Opera (1972), the Cultural Revolution (1973), and many others (1975, etc.). Mackerras was also among the first to pay attention to the music of national minorities (1985). Other important publications during that period include those of Chun-jo Liu on Buddhist liturgy (1973, 1978) and Isabel Wong on Kun opera (1978).

Music History

Music historians, like other sinologists, pay special attention to pre-Qin sources. Representative works are Kauffman 1976; DeWoskin 1982, 1989; Falkenhausen 1992; Cook 1995; and Yuhwen Wang 2004. One topic of particular interest is bronze bells in pre-Qin times, with publications by Mok (1978), McClain (1985), Kuttner (1989), Z. Wang (1996), and in particular the monumental study by Lothar von Falkenhausen (1993). As a companion study, Ingrid Furniss looked at pre-Qin strings, winds, and drums (2008). These studies of early musical instruments take advantage of recent advances in Chinese archaeology but are also influenced by ideas from North American ethnomusicology and cultural anthropology. Scholars in cognate disciplines, particularly art history, have also contributed to research on ancient musical instruments. Notable such works include Watt 1981, So 2000, Addis 1999, and Huehns 2003. In recent years, retired physicist Bo Lawergren has published a series of studies of the prehistory of the qin zither (2003a, etc.).

Historical studies of post-Qin dynasties based on documentary research and incorporating Western ethnomusicology include work on the Song (Pian 1967, etc.; Lam 1995b), Yuan (Lam 1994b), Ming (Lam 1988, etc.; Zhang 1992), and Qing (Yu 1996; Wu 1998b). Provine's work on Korean court ritual music relies extensively on Chinese sources and sheds much light on the history of Chinese music (1988, etc.). Most of these studies focus on music in the imperial court, as copious sources are available. A different approach to the study of music of the past is Laurence Picken's reconstruction of Tang court music based on sources of Japanese Gagaku music. Picken published extensively on the broader scope of music history (1977, etc.); his many students and their students now teach on faculties throughout Europe, North America, and Australia. An important article that raised historiographical questions was "'There Is No Music in Chinese Music History': Five Court Tunes from the Yuan Dynasty (A.D. 1271–1368)" by Joseph Lam (1994b).

Traditional Musical Genres

The opening of the People's Republic in the late 1970s and the increasing influence of anthropology on musical studies in North America attracted many scholars, who conducted ethnographic work on music in the People's Republic, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and other places with large Chinese communities. These scholars produced studies of genres under each of the four major musical categories as classified by Chinese scholars at the time: musical instruments and instrumental music, traditional operas, narrative songs, and folk songs.

Under musical instruments, aside from the historical studies mentioned earlier, notable writings include those on qin (Lieberman 1977, etc.; Yung 1984a, etc.; Lam 1993; Huang 1998), pipa (Addison 1974; Myers 1992), zheng (Cheng 1991; Chen 1991; Thrasher 1995), dizi (Lau 1996a, etc.), erhu (I. Liu 1988; Stock 1993–94; Liang 1996), and instrumental ensemble musics (Yeh 1988; Yingfen Wang 1992a, etc.; Dujunco 1994; Witzleben 1995, 2005; Lau 1998; Chou 2002; Chow-Morris 2010). Of particular interest are Stephen Jones's studies of instrumental music in rural northern China (1995, etc.). Notable studies on traditional operas include Kun opera (Hu 1984; Lam 1994a; Swatek 2002; Rolston 2002), Peking Opera (Pian 1970, etc.; Wichmann 1991; Jinpei Huang 1989; Goldstein 2007), Cantonese Opera (Ward 1985; Yung 1976a, etc.; Chan 1986, etc.; Guldin 1993; Yu 1994), Shanghai

Opera (Stock 1997, etc.), Shanxi Opera (Nygren 2000), and Peking Opera and local operas on Taiwan (Haseltine 1979; Guy 1999, 2005). For narrative songs, important works include a series of studies on several kinds in the Beijing area (Pian 1978, etc.), Tianjin (Rebollo-Sborgi 1994; Lawson 2011b), Suzhou (Pian 1986; Tsao 1987; Bender 2003; Webster-Cheng 2008), and Guangdong (Yung 1976b, etc.). Folksong studies include those from Jiangsu (Schimmelpenninck 1997), the northwest (Tuohy 1988, 1999; Lowry 1990; Pian 1992; Yang 1994b; Dai et al. 1999), Taiwan (Lin 2011), and others (Yang 1996, 1997), as well as Yang's critique of political interference (1994a) in folk song research.

Of particular interest to scholars of North America is music in religious and other ritual contexts, including China's three major religions of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. Many scholars examine the scriptural, philosophical, and ritual links to music through historical and ethnographic methodology (Liu 1973, etc.; Liang 1975; Tsao 1989; Tsao and Shi 1992; Wei 1992; Boltz 1996; Judd 1996; Li 1996; Rees 2000; H. Tan 2000; Tsai 2002a, etc.; P. Chen 2004, etc.; Lau 2004a; Du 2004; C. Chen 2006; Jones 2007, etc.). Of special significance is a series of publications by Joseph Lam on sacrifices to Confucius and their music (1988, etc.), which focuses on court and orthodox rituals. A collaboration between a historian, an anthropologist, and a musicologist resulted in a volume of essays dedicated to music and ritual, with nine essays on wide-ranging topics (Yung, Rawski, and Watson 1996). Among indigenous folk ritual practices documented by researchers is the bridal lament from different parts of the country (Watson 1996; Qi et al. 1999; McLaren and Chen 2000; Ho 2005). Other ritual contexts studied include Christianity (C. O. Wong 2006), Hong Kong's handover to China (Witzleben 2002; Yu 2004, 2005), and the Beijing Olympics (Lawson 2011a).

Contemporary Music

For the last century or so, particularly in the last thirty years, China has experienced drastic changes in political, social, and economic ideology and structure, along with rapid technological advancement. Inevitably, music has also undergone changes. These changes provide exciting opportunities for research into the dynamic interaction between music and its environment. On the one hand, the focus is on how traditional music adjusts to the new society; on the other, it is on how such interaction and adjustment shed light on Chinese society and culture through the lens of musical change.

Some notable works address political ideology (McDougall 1984; Holm 1991), the pre-Cultural Revolution period (Holm 1977; Link 1984; Wong 1984; Lau 1996a etc.; Webster-Cheng 2008), the Cultural Revolution (Yung 1984b; Mittler 2003; Perris 1983; Bryant 2005, 2007), and the June fourth protest of 1989 (Samson 1991).

After the Beijing government's institution of the "Reform and Open" policy in the late 1970s, Western-style pop music was introduced to the country, first from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan and later from the United States. These imported pop songs, followed by homegrown ones, exploded in popularity, a process facilitated by advancements in media technology and the development of the market economy. The 1980s and 1990s were also the decades when popular music and culture became increasingly important research topics in North America. Music scholars interested in China naturally turned to the study of pop music culture on the mainland as another means of understanding China's new society and economy. Their works foreground issues linked to commercialism (Brace 1991; Brace

and Friedlander 1992; Hamm 1991); political, social, and cultural concerns (A. Jones 1992, etc.; de Kloet 2005; Moskowitz 2010); and the position of national minorities (Baranovitch 2003a). Specific kinds of popular music discussed include jazz (Zhang and Hartigan 2001; A. Jones 2001), hip hop (Fung 2008), the phenomenon of the 12-Girls Band (Yang and Saffle 2010), and pop music in Hong Kong (Lee 1992; Witzleben 1999; Latham 2000; Ho 2000, 2003; Fung and Cutrin 2002).

The study of contemporary music also includes so-called serious, art, or concert music, which is the focus of publications by Zhou (1993), Mittler (1997), and Rao (2002b). Everett and Lau (2004), Melvin and Cai (2004), and Green and Liang (2007) edited entire volumes on the subject. As Chinese composers have gained increasing recognition in the international musical world in the 1990s and the twentieth century, studies on individual composers and their works have also proliferated (Utz 1999; Young 2007). Other publications explore how Chinese music has influenced avant-garde music in the West (Rao 2004, 2007; Granade 2010).

National Minorities

While most research attention has been on the music of the Han people, music of national minorities has not been entirely neglected, with some of the earlier publications by Mackerras (1985), Standifer (1986), and Thrasher (1990) leading the way. As China relaxed restrictions on travel to remote areas by foreigners, and as the transportation network developed, the study of national minorities flourished accordingly. Music of the Uygurs has received great attention (Baranovitch 2003a, etc.; Harris 2002, etc.; C. F. Wong 2006a, b). Rees worked on the Naxi people of the southwest (1993, etc.), Baranovitch (2009a) and Chao (2010) wrote on Inner Mongolia, and Congdon (2007) and Baranovitch (2009b) wrote on Tibet. Other ethnic groups, such as the Li, Hui, Yi, and Zhuang, have also been studied (Thrasher 1990; Yang 1996, 1997; Harris 2004).

The Diaspora

Chinese communities throughout the world practice the music they brought with them to their adopted homes but have also developed new styles and genres as they interact with their hosts. The study of the diaspora is a major topic for music scholars. For communities in Southeast Asia, Tong Soon Lee published a series of studies of Chinese traditional operas in Singapore (2000, etc.). Others who have explored various genres maintained by Chinese communities in the region include Tan Sooi Beng on Malaysia (2001), Fred Lau on Singapore and Thailand (2002, etc.), and Terry Miller on Thailand (2010). In addition, Chinese communities in North America are natural subjects for local scholars. Riddle (1976, etc.) and Leung (1977) were among the earliest to document Cantonese Opera. More recently Rao (2002a, 2011) and Lei (2003) have written about the history of Chinese opera in North America, Moon has covered the history of Chinese American vaudeville (2005a, b), and Fung has investigated hip-hop (2008). Samson (1999) revisited the musical scene in San Francisco previously documented by Riddle, and Bryant looks at the identity of Chinese Americans as expressed through performance (2009). A major work is Su Zheng's recent monograph (2010). Examples of the study of complex forms of identity negotiation and expression among wayfaring Chinese are Pak's MA thesis on Chinese Christians in North America (1996) and Lu's articles on Burmese Chinese in Rangoon (2011) and Taiwan (2008).

It may be appropriate here to mention also the study of music in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Nancy Guy has published extensively on Taiwan, focusing particularly on political issues, including Peking Opera and cross-strait politics (1999, etc.), the Kuomintang national anthem (2002a), and the song “A Flower in the Rainy Night” as cultural symbol (2008). Studies of Hong Kong, in addition to those mentioned earlier, frequently focus on the political ramifications of popular songs (Witzleben 2002; Ho 2000, etc.).

Individual Musicians and Composers

Research on individual Chinese musicians was relatively sparse during the early days. Notable publications from this era on individual musicians include one on Peking Opera star Mei Lan-Fang (Scott 1971) and a translation of the autobiography of the Peking Drumsong singer Zhang Cuifeng (Pian 1984). In recent decades, increasing attention has been paid to individuals, be they historical figures, folk musicians, pop stars, classical music performers, or avant-garde composers. Major examples include writings on Song dynasty musician Jiang Kui (Lam 2001); early-twentieth-century musicians Liu Tianhua (Liang 1996) and A Bing (Stock 1996; Yuhwen Wang 2010); legendary singer-actress Zhou Xuan (Stock 1995; Steen 2000); musicologist Yang Yinliu (Micic 2009); qin master Tsar Teh-yun (Yung 2008); three generations of qin musicians (Huang 1998); He Yi’an, a master of Lijiang’s Dongjing music and ritual (Rees 2001); Shanghai local opera legend Xia Fulin (Stock 2001); and Taiwan’s aboriginal musicians (Shzr Ee Tan 2000). In addition, attention has also been paid to concert musicians, including composers Huang Zi (Cheung 2010), Zhou Wenzhong (Lai 1993; Chang 2001), Tan Dun (Chang 1991), Lang Lang (Hung 2009), and Law Wing-fai (Lau 2007) and conductor Li Delun (Chou 1999). Of particular importance is the volume *Lives in Chinese Music*, edited by Helen Rees (2009a), which includes chapters on seven individuals, some celebrated, others lesser known.

Some Theoretical Issues and Methodological Breakthroughs

The last two decades have seen an increasing number of works that explore broad theoretical issues influenced by cultural studies in North America. For example, gender studies in music and traditional opera provide particularly fertile ground for such inquiries, with important works by scholars such as Su Zheng (1997, etc.), Joseph Lam (2003, etc.), and Siu Leung Li (2003). Other cutting-edge topics include eroticism (Yang 1998, Lam 2010), masculinity (Lam 2011), transnationalism (C. O. Wong 2006; Congdon 2007; Zheng 2010), globalization (Ho 2003; Harris 2005a; Lam 2008; Baranovitch 2009b), modernity (Jones 2001; Lau 2008b; Cheung 2009), and the environment (Guy 2009).

Another notable new direction of research is the investigation of intellectual property rights and cultural rights, in which Nancy Guy’s pathbreaking essay led the way (2002b), followed closely by Rees 2003, 2009b; Harris 2005b; and Yung 2009. A methodological issue of writing on Chinese music in the English language is the representation of names and genres, which has wide political and practical implications. Nancy Guy first raised the concern (1998), which solicited diverse viewpoints published in the 1998 issue of *ACMR Reports*.

Empirical research in music cognition, long established in Western classical music, has recently been developed in the study of Chinese music and ethnomusicology, particularly in comparative studies (Li

and Leman 2007; Nan et al. 2006, 2008). Another rare methodological approach is by Witzleben, who breaks away from the usual focus on a particular genre of music to treat broad intergenre relationships within a local musical “system” as a means of exploring the dynamic interplay among instrumental, vocal, theatrical, and religious traditions (2000).

Final Remarks

China’s economic growth and political liberalization since the 1980s have promoted research in Chinese music and enhanced the interaction between Chinese and North American scholars. An increasing number of academics from both sides have participated in and read papers at conferences on the other shore. In addition, a growing number of translations of scholarship have been published, and their quantity and quality continue to improve. In particular, the North American scholars are taking advantage of easy travel to all parts of China to explore new venues for ethnographic fieldwork, and Chinese scholars have learned of the theories and methodologies of Western ethnomusicology. In an innovative new development, many Chinese scholars are now spending six months to two years at North American universities as visiting scholars, thus enhancing the opportunities for mutual understanding. The ready accessibility of vast amounts of primary and secondary sources through digital library facilities on both sides offers new opportunities and challenges. Such cross-fertilization between two scholarly systems and practices long separated and differing in their limitations and ideologies promises to push the frontier of Chinese music research to new horizons.

Notes

Bell Yung is a Professor of Music, specializing in the music of China, and the former director of the Asian Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh. He received his higher education in the United States, with degrees from the University of California, Berkeley, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Harvard University. His most recent books and articles are *The Last of China's Literati: The Music, Poetry, and Life of Tsar Teb-yun* (2008); *Music and Cultural Rights* (2009); *The Flower Princess, a Cantonese Opera* (2010); "Voices of Hong Kong: The Reconstruction of a Performance in a Teahouse," *Critical Zone 3* (2009); and "Peking Opera and Regional Operas," in *Encyclopedia of Modern China* (2009). He has also published extensively in Chinese academic journals and has edited and produced DVDs, CDs, and museum catalogs. He is the recipient of numerous honors and grants from numerous foundations, including the Guggenheim, Mellon, Ford, American Council of Learned Societies, National Endowment for the Humanities, Fulbright, and Chiang Ching-kuo.

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¹ The scholarly boundary between "North America" and elsewhere is difficult to define, particularly in this age of digital libraries and JSTOR, an online archive of academic journals in all fields. The bibliography in this essay lists mainly English-language books and journal articles published in North America, but it also includes many from elsewhere that are widely available in North America and a number published by scholars who reside elsewhere but often participate in conferences in North America.

² The bibliography makes no attempt to be comprehensive, but aims to include representative publications and important scholars. Individual essays in collected volumes are given separate entries when they warrant special mention in the text. Doctoral dissertations are included selectively from two periods. The first is the early period (pre-1980, even though dissertations from this era may have been formally published later), to give a sense of historical development in graduate training and research. The second is the last few years, in order to take account of dissertations that have not yet been published, and to highlight recent research projects.

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Art History: Comparative Methodology, Pragmatism, and the Seeds of Doubt

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In this essay I want to deal with how the study of Chinese art history in North America has developed within the general discourse of Western art history and largely outside the study of the history of art inside China. Any “discourse”—the body of all written, spoken, and recorded thoughts accepted by consensus inside a social community—tends to build on past observations and learning, creating on that basis an impressive corpus of scholarship and interpretation. Ideology defines what ideas are acceptable to members inside a “discourse community,” and the lineage of discourse forms a tradition that over time has the ability to produce its own accepted reality. In Western art history, ideological speculation on the process of “civilization,” “culture,” “progress,” “diffusion,” “independent invention,” “multiculturalism,” “pluralism,” and “material culture” have all contributed to how the West views itself in relation to the East. It is necessary to realize, however, that these various conjectures, at different times, were rooted in shifting paradigms in Western polemics on religion, racialism, and evolution. Changing attitudes in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century intellectual inquiry—from racist ethnology reliant on biblical assumptions to human anthropology based on sociocultural evolutionism—influenced Western historical and art historical approaches to Chinese culture and art. It is within this polemical context that there developed persistent notions (accepted realities) such as the belief that Chinese art has sometimes been thought to be stylistically static and “unchanging” for thousands of years.¹ This type of biased thinking parallels the belief that, whereas Western social development is characterized by reason and progress, Eastern society fell victim to despotism and stagnation—the theory of “Oriental despotism” that was still debated well into the 1960s and later.²

It is not entirely possible to separate studies of Chinese art history in North America from the theory and practice of Western art history in general, nor from the history of Chinese art as practiced in China and Japan. Diplomatic estrangement between the China and the United States from 1950 into the 1970s, however, fostered a generation of American scholars who were unable to travel in China or to work together with their mainland Chinese counterparts. This separation resulted in American scholars (as well as diasporic Chinese scholars, collectors, and artists) developing and pursuing independent avenues of research with greater attention to meaning, context, and content than connoisseurship. This Western tendency is clearly outlined in Jerome Silbergeld’s “Chinese Painting Studies in the West: A State-of-the-Field Article.”³

Isolation also resulted in American art historians having access to only a limited number of Chinese works of art in museums and private collections primarily in Taiwan, Japan, and the West. Since the mid-1970s, the statistical base of “authenticated” paintings and calligraphies has greatly

expanded with the gradual publication of mainland museum collections, although opportunities for on-site research are still too often restricted, and high-quality photographic images for research purposes are only beginning to become available for any but the best-known works of art. At the same time, the immeasurable number of newly discovered archaeological artifacts is overwhelming. Only a small percentage of the enormity of excavated materials, however, has been fully published, and until recently most Western scholars have had to rely on evidence conveyed second- or thirdhand in excavation reports, journals, and newspapers. Because of these factors, the question arises as to whether we need to reassess the corpus of scholarship and interpretation traditionally accepted by art historians and archaeologists. Put another way, because of the significantly expanded statistical base of art and archaeological materials, there is a growing need to include them in a reevaluation of former Western and Eastern theories and formulations about Chinese art history. It might be argued that the art history of Chinese art has been written having only considered a small fraction of the available materials, and for many types of art there still remain no working models for analysis. For example, besides traditionally venerated Song to Qing literati or amateur painting, there is still much work to be done with the great variety of anonymous, regional, and workshop paintings that too often have been collectively thrown into the category of professional, decorative, or popular painting. Many Western museums contain a large number of Chinese paintings and works of art that have yet to receive significant art historical attention; they are presently more often being studied under the rubric of material culture or visual studies but not as art. One suspects that many works of this kind in mainland collections have yet to be published let alone recognized as worth studying. What this implies is that until all raw material can be included in the statistical base, any analysis is provisional and should be continually reassessed and revised as new materials become available.

In Silbergeld's "Chinese Painting Studies in the West," the situation before the late 1980s is summarized.

Where the intellectual and social context of traditional East Asian culture remains most intact, the study of painting has perpetuated the concerns and modes of the thousand-plus years of traditional historiography, yet this has become increasingly rare. . . . In the West, where most of those who study Chinese painting cannot themselves paint, do more than dabble in calligraphy, or lay claim to being part of the Chinese cultural elite, and where an understanding of the Chinese cultural context cannot be taken for granted, the need for cross-cultural explanation has generated studies unique in character, blending sinology with Eurocentric art-historical questions and methods. This Western approach, with its skeptical analysis and egalitarian perspective, has provided new techniques of stylistic analysis for reevaluating the traditional dates and attributions of paintings and yielded a new, more objective basis for examining the theory, content, and sociocultural basis of Chinese painting.⁴

According to Silbergeld, what is "unique in character" in Chinese art history studies in the West is the blending of traditional sinological methods and Western approaches "with its skeptical analysis and egalitarian perspective." The skeptical or fallibilist mind-set is deep seated in much of American thought and rhetoric, and it is the subject I want to begin to explore in the remainder of this essay. In the American intellectual context, the seeds of doubt are deeply rooted in the philosophy of American

pragmatism, which was highly influential in America during the early twentieth century and continues to have a significant impact. Before examining the influence of philosophical pragmatism on the North American study of Chinese art history, it will be helpful to examine the intellectual context in which it developed.

At the risk of oversimplification, it might be said that the mid-nineteenth century witnessed a transition from biblical assumptions as the basis for the study of human psychic and physiological development to naturalistic principles as key to a “comparative methodology” for studying the evolution of human society and culture. In the earlier paradigm, Prichardian ethnology assumed a biblical unity of man and enlisted comparative linguistics and physiology (including comparative anatomy and phrenology) to trace the spread of civilization back to a diluvian origin. Monogenetic in ideological conviction, the processes of diffusionism and degeneration came to be used to explain gradations of “civilization,” “barbarism,” and “savagery” as these were observed among the different human races. On the one hand, geographic diffusion away from a unified center traced the supposed progress and triumph of “one’s own” European civilization. On the other hand, social and cultural degeneration due to environmental or “scientific” physiological and anatomical factors came to explain the impediments to the development of other races, not one’s own. In a slightly different interpretation, both directions reflect differing degrees of degeneration, and according to the American historian of anthropology George W. Stocking Jr., in the underlying biblical model that “was the most widely accepted in the pre-Darwinian nineteenth century: all five races were the offspring of a single primeval Caucasian type, which had ‘degenerated’ in two directions.”⁵

An alternative viewpoint interprets the cultural diversity among races as evidence of independent invention, which sometimes challenged the assumption of humankind’s original unity with assertions of polygenesis. Although the actual discourse is much more complex, this perspective not only began to prepare the way for sociocultural evolutionism but also set the parameters of the debate between artistic diffusion and independent invention. In studies on art history and archaeology, including those on China, pride of place and ethnicity often dictated the direction in space of cultural diffusion, or the priority in time of the independent invention of artistic designs and techniques in ceramics, metallurgy, painting, printing, and so on. This framework of inquiry—the controversy over who invented what first and where—makes one think about art not only in terms of the shape of time but also with regard to the geography of art.⁶ In general, scholars in the West and China tended to adopt a diffusionist stance prior to about 1950 (e.g., the views on Early Bronze Age metallurgy by Li Ji 李濟 [1896–1979], who trained in physical anthropology at Harvard University). Afterward they came to accept more the idea of indigenous origins by means of independent invention, though for different reasons and with different missions.⁷

Diffusionist ideas in ethnology also found support in the British antiquarian movement as early as the sixteenth century when the search for antiquities was partly motivated by a desire to trace genealogical ancestry back to the descendants of Noah. Making use of surviving archaeological artifacts, this movement helped lead to the development and institutionalization of British archaeology in the mid–nineteenth century.⁸ Somewhat ironically, it was at about this same moment that prehistoric archaeology, along with geological and fossil discoveries, caused the scope of human time to be radically expanded from a period of only six thousand years formerly prescribed by biblical chronology. This

revolution in human time—along with the ideas of evolutionism and natural selection current around the time of Charles Darwin's *The Origins of Species* (1859) and later Darwinistic teleological thinking (so-called social Darwinism)—gave rise to a new paradigmatic framework for understanding the development of human civilization by natural processes.⁹

As Darwin observed, the geological record appears “as a history of the world imperfectly kept,”¹⁰ where what little we know is only the latest chapter plus some fragmentary pages, sentences, or words from earlier sections. Similarly, the natural scientist, historian, and cultural anthropologist struggle to make sense of what has survived to sketch a story that in many respects is unknowable. The extended span in human time heightens the awareness of inevitable gaps in the archaeological record and the story of human development. Nevertheless, despite numerous periods in which documentary evidence is entirely absent, it was reasoned that missing links or phases in the evolution of human society and culture could be reconstructed by comparison with generalized or universal developmental stages—that is to say, by not relying on data with any specific geographic connection or linked to any particular historical sequence. This comparative method of sociocultural evolutionism assumed that under certain circumstances particular effects result from, or correlate to, particular causes, which can be explained by naturalistic principles or laws. Imagine history as a ladder where each successive rung corresponds to a documented historical fact or event ordered chronologically, and where the gaps between rungs are undocumentable. By assuming a progression from rung to rung, it is possible to hypothesize reasons for how it is possible to advance to the next rung. If one also assumes that such reasons correspond to natural principles, then the ladder can be interpreted as representing sequential stages of rational and natural development: progress.¹¹ The stages of such a ladder, therefore, can be generally thought to operate uniformly in the past, present, and future, as well as to apply universally to all men. Such a ladder might be used to reconstruct past developments or predict future progress.

The comparative methodology of sociocultural evolutionism provided a new paradigm for how to reconstruct the history of the past through a sequence or series of developmental stages. In studies of archaeology and art history, this inferential method also became a predominant model for reconstructing the sequence of past stylistic stages or “period styles.” One of the purest examples of this methodology is Max Loehr's (1903–88) remarkable formulation of the five phases or styles of Chinese bronze vessel decoration in his 1953 article “The Bronze Styles of the Anyang Period (1300–1028 B.C.).”¹² Loehr examined unprovenanced bronzes—without known historical context, symbolic content, or functional or ritual meaning—and he was able to hypothesize a developmental sequence by assuming correlations between artistic intent and changes in style. Such correlations suggested conjectural relationships such as a natural progression from flat to sculptural designs or from artistically and technologically simple to more complex shapes and decorations. Subsequent archaeological discoveries, moreover, have corresponded remarkably well with Loehr's predicted sequence. Though not perfect, his ladder of stylistic development has proven to be a workable sequence that has been useful in dating bronzes by means of stylistic comparison.

In another example, Wen C. Fong used comparative methodology for the stylistic analysis of landscape painting. Combining traditional connoisseurship with Western methodology, in his essays in *Images of the Mind* Fong focused on structural principles in landscape painting to show how artists in different periods developed new ways of rendering spatial recession, beginning with simple overlapping

planes and progressing to the invention of a continuous pictorial ground plane.¹³ To distinguish the various stylistic stages, Fong used firmly dated works of art as “monuments” to serve as the rungs of his ladder, which mapped a process in which artists improved on former pictorial solutions, what Ernst Gombrich called “schema and correction.”¹⁴ While both Loehr and Fong granted artists intentional purpose in solving artistic challenges, the latter correlated stylistic stages with the concept of “period styles.” Theoretically, anonymous and undated landscape paintings can be compared against the stylistic ladder to determine their probable date and/or period style. In this way, the gaps in art history can be speculatively repopulated and reconstructed. According to Silbergeld, Fong “broadly characterizes the periods of Chinese landscape painting in terms of pictorial representation (Han through Song), calligraphic self-expression (Yuan), revivalism (early and middle Ming), and synthesis (late Ming to middle Qing).” He continues, “Students today, in retrospect, might well regard this approach as self-evident, which is a testament to its widespread influence not only in the West but increasingly in Asia as well.”¹⁵

Despite broad acceptance of the comparative method of stylistic analysis, the methodology is not without problems, and not without important challengers.¹⁶ A ladder of stylistic development depends on the assumption that artists always work in a logically thought out and intentional manner, as well as relying on the selection and constituency of its statistical base. It can be argued that without rational intent on the part of all artists, there is no predictability, only possible correlation; hence there is no reason to expect stylistic likeness to signal similar artistic intent and, consequently, no basis for comparative analysis. If, for example, when artists are prone to erratic behavior or deviate from the expected norm, because the art they create during these moments may not fit the accepted expectations when measured against a stylistic ladder, are such anomalies to be discarded as inauthentic? There are already too many works of art that do not fit on any stylistic ladder or have not yet found their way into any statistical model.

In addition, because the selection of monuments forming a stylistic sequence is open to personal interpretation, the choice of constituent objects forming a ladder is always subjective. The particular objects an individual scholar studies and believes important or authentic will inform his or her choice and sequence of monuments. Take, for example, the 1999 conference focusing on the painting *Riverbank* (溪岸圖) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which has been variously identified by eminent scholars as being a work by Dong Yuan 董源 (active 930s–960s), a work by a Song or Yuan artist, or even a modern forgery by Zhang Daqian 張大千 (1899–1983).¹⁷ A similar lack of consensus was evident at a 2001 conference on the famous painting *Admonitions of the Instructress to the Court Ladies* (女史箴圖) attributed to Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (ca. 344–406) in the British Museum.¹⁸ That so many prominent American, Chinese, European, and Japanese scholars disagree about such noteworthy works, however, does not mean that any one of them is right or wrong. Instead, it only means that every scholar begins selectively with a different knowledge set. Some may rely more heavily on textual sources, have access to different materials, benefit from scientific laboratory testing, or interpret what they see from a different perspective.

The geographic and historical relationships, if any, between the selected constituent monuments of a stylistic ladder are also important. An interesting aspect of comparative ladders is that if they are seen to reflect natural processes, then priority is given to the perceived patterns of development

at the expense of direct geographic or historical (spatial or temporal) connections. An example is the stylistic ladder of architectural development presented to a Western audience in *Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture* by Liang Sicheng 梁思成 (1901–72), who received his architectural training at the University of Pennsylvania.¹⁹ Following the “comparative analysis” used in Banister Fletcher’s *A History of Architecture*, Liang proceeded to outline three main stylistic stages—Vigor (Tang dynasty), Elegance (Song–Yuan dynasties), and Rigidity (Ming–Qing dynasties)—which roughly parallel the masculine Doric, feminine Ionic, and ornate Corinthian orders formulated in Western architecture.²⁰ Regardless of whether or not the developmental sequence of European architecture is applicable to China, in constructing his stylistic ladder Liang juxtaposed buildings of different types, with different functions, and from different locations across vast regions to tell the stylistic story of a monolithic Chinese architecture. This is comparable to trying to take scattered examples from across America, England, France, Germany, Italy, and other regions in order to describe a single coherent path for the stylistic development of all Western architecture. What one selects to include in the statistical base that forms one’s knowledge set, therefore, goes a long way in determining what story is told.

The statistical base—the range and scope of materials taken into consideration—determines the basic knowledge set. As mentioned earlier, diplomatic relations had restricted American scholars from examining materials inside China and vice versa. An overreliance on any one type of source material, whether archaeological, textual, or aesthetic, or judging and selecting works with a preference toward artistic quality or social import, also colors intellectual interpretation. Another example is the traditional preference for literati art, compounded by the phenomenon that literati authors or associates of the upper classes composed a preponderance of the surviving writings and critical discourses about Chinese art and its history.²¹ This has resulted in a situation in which the vast majority of Chinese artistic production has been ignored or relegated to nonart categories. Each of the foregoing scholarly biases can be said to represent cases in which the statistical base is “misused” to interpret only favorable data in ways that encourage a consensus in scholarly discourse.

A statistical base constitutes a data field or probability model. With origins in the mid–seventeenth century, the mathematical science of statistics concerns the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. Taking into account human and mechanical variables, as well as the “law of errors,” although collected facts from repeated measurement of the same object or event will vary with each observation and with each observer, the degree of error—uncertainty, imprecision, and inaccuracy—can be mathematically measured and modeled. “The genius of statistics . . . was that it did not ignore errors [i.e., uncertainty, imprecision, and inaccuracy]; it quantified them,” so that “the deviations from the mean are as predictable as the mean itself.”²² This measure of predictability was sometimes even understood to reflect natural law. In a sense, statistics allows what we can never know with certainty to become knowable within a range of probability. In this way, statistics can be used to “describe” a set of compiled data, or it can be used to “infer” or “predict” patterns and processes in the data.²³ The latter, “predictive statistics,” perhaps, has too often been invoked pseudo-scientifically as a parallel model for the inferential methodology discussed above for reconstructing the sequence of societal and cultural development (in the past, present, or future) by comparison to a ladder of events, monuments, or styles.

The fervent interest in statistics during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries helped to validate the use of the comparative method for the study of human society and culture, including art history.

With Pierre-Simon Laplace (1749–1827) in France, and with his followers Benjamin Peirce (1809–80) and his son Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) in America, statistics was applied to astronomy, jurisprudence, scientific methods, and the study of human behavior and the social sciences. Even Darwin's theory of natural selection depended on his taking statistical research into account.²⁴ Although Darwin himself was not a statistician and had limited mathematical talent, Charles Peirce felt that “Mr. Darwin proposed to apply the statistical method to biology.”²⁵ In the nineteenth century—which the chemist and historian John Theodore Merz (1840–1922) named “the statistical century”—the increasing application of predictive statistics and the law of errors to the study of human beings and society was not only novel but for many people appalling.²⁶ It was scandalous to reduce human behavior to a set of numbers that replaced ordained divine law with what seemed to be predictable natural law. It was even more frightening to think that natural processes might mechanically predetermine the course of human progress.

With strong links to the study of statistics and probability, the American philosopher, astronomer, mathematician, and physicist Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914) was the first to use the term *pragmatism* (later he changed the name to *pragmaticism*) to describe a method of logic in which the belief in any idea or concept of the mind is a function of its practical effect in action. According to Stocking, “Kant thought of ‘pragmatic belief’ as one of several kinds of belief; Peirce thought it was the only kind of belief. In a world that never repeats itself with exactitude, *all* believing is betting. Our beliefs and concepts are, in the end, only guesses about how things will behave most of the time.”²⁷ From this perspective, knowledge is the result of practical experience. It cannot be known a priori in advance of action, and any new or additional action will change the knowledge set and, consequently, change what has been known. It is not a matter of knowledge being absolutely right or wrong. Instead, knowledge was seen as fallible in the sense that it was never absolutely certain and forever a work in progress that needs to be revised as new empirical data are added to the knowledge set. Peirce called this theoretical approach “fallibilism.” Effective action through sensible experience and empirical testing, however, did lead to inferred “habits of action,” which generated belief and a *sense* of certitude.

A distinction should be made between Peirce's pragmatism as a method that focused on understanding knowledge doubtfully, and pragmatism as a theory of truth that was later developed by William James (1842–1910), who is commonly regarded as one of the most influential American thinkers. Peirce placed greater emphasis on the struggle to understand what knowledge is. In principle, because all knowledge was to him provisional, knowing cannot be certain and is always fallible. If knowledge is uncertain and perception varies from person to person (and sometimes in the same individual from moment to moment), how can it mirror the real world or the history of humankind or art? In order for a sense of certainty to be established, it is only through social consensus that a provisional representation of the world briefly flickers into focus. Seen in this way, knowledge does not passively mirror the world but actively participates in making the image of the world by momentary consensus.²⁸ Contrast this notion of mirroring to the traditional Chinese view that knowledge and history mirror the moral state of a society, its people, and its ruling dynasty.²⁹

Chinese art history in North America has developed since the nineteenth century within a discourse with deep roots in comparative methodology, pragmatism, and the seeds of doubt. Unlike skepticism, which derives from opposition to or confrontation with an entrenched belief or conventional orthodoxy,

fallibilistic pragmatism understands knowledge provisionally as an ongoing process of inquiry. With vast numbers of Chinese works of art still to be documented and archaeological materials continuing to be discovered, this means that there is an ongoing need to update the art historical statistical base and knowledge set. It also means that there can be no absolute certainty. All comparative ladders and sequences for stylistic dating are provisional frameworks—workable models awaiting revision. As new materials are added for consideration, each framework will need to be reassessed. This parallels scientific inquiry, in which analysis of empirical data leads to a hypothesis that then needs to be tested and revised with the results of new experiments and discoveries. From a pragmatist's viewpoint, even in science the idea of absolute certainty is a fiction, as evidenced by the changing consensus in the belief in Newtonian, Einsteinian, or quantum physics, and now onto string theory and beyond.³⁰

The paradigmatic shift to the comparative methodology of sociocultural evolutionism signaled a change from supernatural to natural explanations: from pre-Darwinian biblical assumptions to biological or natural processes (see above). Is it possible that the shift to a new intellectual paradigm unintentionally resulted in the displacement of “beauty” in Western art history by a greater consideration of symbolic content and social context, as well as of material and visual culture? The Western ideal of beauty based on mimesis was extended to ideal forms and divinity, and by the eighteenth century it came to be recognized as a common principle of all the arts.³¹ With the change to a belief in natural principles, the ideal of beauty as an artistic criterion may have become less relevant. The concept of “art,” therefore, may also have become less germane, with increasing attention being turned to what an object or image—as material commodity or visual sign—can tell us about cultural meaning and social function. The object or image is no longer judged passively to be art because of a priori principles. Instead, it may now be pragmatically interpreted as the result of a function of its practical effect in actively providing and receiving meaning and context.

Knowing historically the changing ideas and methods of the general discourse in Western art history allows us to understand better the underlying ideologies that drove, and in many cases still drive, Chinese art historical consensus as it has developed in North America. In retrospect, what may be most “unique in character” in American studies of Chinese art history are the seeds of doubt sown by intellectual pragmatism and fallibilism that seem to parallel the adoption of scientific research methods for the social sciences. Doubt, however, is not uncommon in scholarly research. Almost every generation of scholars questions and challenges the interpretations and conjectures of its predecessors. Most skeptics and doubters, however, mainly focus on questioning the authenticity of myths, facts, and other sources of knowledge, and their correct interpretation. In contrast, what is distinctive in American inquiry, growing out of pragmatism, is that what is questioned is the very understanding of knowledge as absolute certainty or truth.

Chinese scholarship, of course, is not without its doubters. A special case is Gu Jiegang 顧頔剛 (1893–1980) and his followers, who styled themselves as the “Doubters of Old” (*yigupai* 疑古派).³² Similar to fallibilism, Gu saw the knowledge of history as dynamic and not defined by absolute truths. He argues, “Step-by-step we reconstruct how the story looked when it first appeared, and how it looked in its second rendition. . . . With this method of ‘not establishing one absolute truth [of an event], but exhausting its transmutations,’ we may not discover the truth, but we have a glimpse of the broad pattern of how the event [has been perceived].”³³ Here, hearing the echoes of American

pragmatism may not be too far-fetched if we remember that Gu's vision of the history of China and its peoples was shaped by Hu Shi 胡適 (1881–1962). Hu Shi had studied at Columbia University with John Dewey 約翰·杜威 (1859–1952), one of the key figures of American pragmatism along with Peirce and James. Hu Shi became Dewey's translator, strongly supported pragmatism (which he translated as 實驗主義), and helped Dewey when he came to give lectures in China in 1919. He arrived in China on May 1, 1919, just days before the May Fourth movement, which piqued his interest and caused him to prolong his stay until July 1921.³⁴ The influence of pragmatism on Chinese intellectual thought, art historical studies, and art education, however, is another story.

Notes

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¹ The notion of "unchanging" as it has been applied to Chinese art is discussed in the introduction by Catherine King and Gill Perry, with Nicola Durbridge, in *Views of Difference: Different Views of Art*, ed. Catherine King (New Haven: Yale University Press with the Open University, 1999), 10: "[W]e may consider the treatment of art in China. Here was a field that could hardly be treated as backward. . . . The solution—for western art historians—was to classify Chinese art as different from the progressive art of the West by interpreting it as unchanging. We should be clear that the word 'unchanging' (were this description of Chinese art even true) was intended to imply a lack, as we can see from its opposition to 'progression.'"

² George W. Stocking Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 3, 11, 14, 19, 32, 111, 125; Frederick W. Mote, "The Growth of Chinese Despotism: A Critique of Wittfogel's Theory of Oriental Despotism as Applied to China," *Oriens Extremus* 8 (1961): 1–41.

³ Jerome Silbergeld, "Chinese Painting Studies in the West: A State-of-the-Field Article," *Journal of Asian Studies* 46.4 (1987): 849–97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 849.

⁵ For background on many ideas in this paragraph, see Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 46–77; the quotation, is from page 26.

⁶ George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962); Thomas DeCosta Kaufmann, *Toward a Geography of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

⁷ Robert Bagley, "Shang Archaeology," in *The Cambridge History of Ancient China: From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.*, ed. Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 131–35; Noel Barnard, "Further Evidence to Support the Hypothesis of Indigenous Origins of Metallurgy in Ancient China," in David N. Keightley, ed. *The Origins of Chinese Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 237–47; Lothar von Falkenhausen, "On the Historiographical Orientation of Chinese Archaeology," *Antiquity* 67 (1993): 839–49.

⁸ Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 53–54, 71.

⁹ Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 69–74; Stephen Jay Gould, *Ever since Darwin: Reflections on Natural History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), 147–52; Rebecca Bedell, “The History of the Earth: Darwin, Geology, and Landscape Art,” in *Endless Forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science, and the Visual Arts*, ed. Diana Donald and Jane Munro (Cambridge, UK: Fitzwilliam Museum; New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2009), 49–79.

¹⁰ Charles Darwin, *The Origins of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (New York: Barnes and Noble Classics, 2004). 250.

¹¹ Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 5–6, 144–85. The comparative methodology recalls Scottish approaches to the “natural progress” and “stages” of civilization in the eighteenth century, which came to be known as “natural history” or “conjectural history.”

¹² Max Loehr, “The Bronze Styles of the Anyang Period (1300–1028 B.C.),” *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*, 7 (1953): 42–53; Robert Bagley, *Max Loehr and the Study of Chinese Bronzes Style and Classification in the History of Art* (Ithaca: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 2008).

¹³ Wen C. Fong, Alfreda Murck, Shou-Chien Shih, Pao-chen Ch’en, and Jan Stuart., *Images of the Mind: Selections from the Edward L. Elliott Family and John B. Elliott Collections of Chinese Calligraphy and Painting at the Art Museum, Princeton University* (Princeton: Art Museum, Princeton University, 1984).

¹⁴ Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961); Paul Richter, “On Professor Gombrich’s Model of Schema and Correction,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 16.4 (1976): 338–46.

¹⁵ Silbergeld, “Chinese Painting Studies in the West,” 853 (romanization has been changed to pinyin).

¹⁶ Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 169–79; Silbergeld, “Chinese Painting Studies in the West,” 853–54.

¹⁷ Judith G. Smith and Wen C. Fong, eds., *Issues of Authenticity in Chinese Painting* (New York: Department of Asian Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999).

¹⁸ Shane McCausland, ed., *Gu Kaizhi and the Admonitions Scroll* (London: British Museum Press in association with the Percival David Foundation of Chinese Art, 2003).

¹⁹ Liang Ssu-ch’eng [Sicheng], *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture: A Study of the Development of Its Structural System and the Evolution of Its Types*, ed. Wilma Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984).

²⁰ Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method for Students, Craftsmen, and Amateurs*, 9th ed. (New York: C. Scribner and Sons, 1931). On Fletcher’s influence on Liang, see Cary Y. Liu, “Between the Titans: Constructions of Modernity and Tradition at the Dawn of Chinese Architectural History,” in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong*, ed. Jerome Silbergeld, Dora C.Y. Ching, Judith G. Smith, and Alfreda Murck (Princeton: P. Y. and Kinmay W. Tang Center for East Asian Art and the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, in association with Princeton University Press, 2011), vol. 1, 191–2, 195, nn. 48, 53.

²¹ According to Silbergeld, “Chinese Painting Studies in the West,” 863, Susan Bush, in her influential *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shih (1037–1101) to Tung Ch’i-ch’ang (1555–1636)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), argued that social class objectives have shaped Chinese painting theory and attempted to establish independent chronologies for the practice, theory, and historical criticism of literati painting.

- ²² Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001), 182.
- ²³ “The Law of Errors” chapter in *ibid.*, 177–200; Stephen M. Stigler, *The History of Statistics: The Measurement of Uncertainty before 1900* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986). On “descriptive” and “inferential” (or “predictive”) statistics, see the Web Center for Social Research: The Knowledge Base, <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/statdesc.php> and <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/statinf.php> (accessed April 15, 2009).
- ²⁴ On Darwin’s consideration of the statistical ideas of Auguste Comte (1798–1857), Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874), and Thomas Malthus (1776–1834), see Silvan S. Schweber, “The Origin of the *Origin* Revisited,” *Journal of the History of Biology* 10.2 (1977): 231–32.
- ²⁵ Charles S. Peirce, “The Fixation of Belief,” *Popular Science Monthly* 12 (November 1877), online edition, <http://www.peirce.org/writings/p107.html> (accessed May 13, 2009).
- ²⁶ Menand, *Metaphysical Club*, 186.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 227.
- ²⁸ This view, as expressed by Nicholas St. John Green (1830–76), influenced Peirce’s thinking. See *ibid.*, 223–25.
- ²⁹ Eugene Wang, “Mirror, Death, and Rhetoric: Reading Later Han Chinese Bronze Artifacts,” *Art Bulletin* 76.3 (1994): 511.
- ³⁰ Sarah Boxer, “Scientists are Confronting the Unknowable,” *New York Times*, January 24, 1998, B7.
- ³¹ See Cary Y. Liu, “Chinese Architectural Aesthetics: Patterns of Living and Being between Past and Present,” in *House, Home, and Family: Living and Being Chinese*, ed. Ronald G. Knapp, and Kai-Yin Lo (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), 156–57, 159, n. 16.
- ³² Laurence A. Schneider, *Ku Chieh-kang and China’s New History: Nationalism and the Quest for Alternative Traditions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Tze-Ki Hon, “Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism: Gu Jiegang’s Vision of a New China in His Studies of Ancient History,” *Modern China* 22.3 (1996): 315–39.
- ³³ Gu Jiegang, *Gusbi bian* 古史辨, 7 vols. (Haikou Shi: Hainan chubanshe, 2005), “答李玄伯先生,” (1:223), cited and translated in Hon, “Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism,” 326.
- ³⁴ Hu Shih, “John Dewey in China,” in *Philosophy and Culture East and West*, ed. Charles A. Moore (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1962), 762–69; Schneider, *Ku Chieh-kang*, 29, 53–65; Hon, “Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism,” 333; Steven C. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 357–58. Other students of Dewey at the time included the educators Jiang Menglin 蔣夢麟 (1886–1964), president of National Beijing University, and Li Jianxun 李建勳 (1884–1976).

Appendix

English/Chinese Comparison Table for Names of Chinese Studies Scholars with a North American Focus: See <http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/17682/>