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## BOOK REVIEWS

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曹錦清著：《黃河邊的中國——一個學者對鄉村社會的觀察與思考》。上海：上海文藝出版社，2000年。（*China Along the Yellow River: A Scholar's Observations and Reflections on Rural Society*, by Cao Jinqing. Shanghai: Shanghai Literary and Arts Publishing House, 2000). 772 pp. RMB 34. ISBN 7-5321-2057-0.

The dominant position of the social science of Marxism-Leninism effectively excluded other branches of the social sciences which were repressed as superfluous and harmful during most of the first three decades of the People's Republic of China.

The past two decades since reform and opening to the outside world have seen the emergence of a generation of Chinese scholars who now combine their training in Western sociological theory and practice with a native's understanding of China's literary and political culture. Their works, including He Qinglian's several hundred thousand copy runaway bestseller, *Zhongguo xiandaihua de xianjing* (The Pitfalls of Chinese Modernization), sometimes find an appreciative audience among the general public both in print and on websites such as Qin Hui's *Issues and Ideology* (<http://www.wtyzy.net>).

Local officials are usually determined to prevent unsupervised scholarly access to China's grassroots as Cao Jinqing of the Shanghai Social Development Research Institute documents repeatedly in *China Along the Yellow River: A Scholar's Observations and Reflections on Chinese Rural Society*. Although Cao got exceptional access to the villages and county governments of Henan province for his spring and fall 1996 surveys, with the help of the Kaifeng Communist Party School, visits were often cut short by local officials who feared that Cao was a spy for China's central government or a mudraking journalist. Cao's spring visits to Henan villages were complemented by interviews with district and county officials who helped fill in the detailed social, economic, cultural and political portrait of rural life in Henan, the central plains province that was home to twelve Chinese dynasties and the birthplace of Chinese civilization.

Cao examines rural social, cultural, political and economic change in Henan during the past two decades under the contract responsibility system. He uses local histories from the Qing dynasty for historical context

to highlight just what is traditional and what are recent changes. For Cao, reading history and literature from the Ming and Qing dynasties and talking with country people are two complementary approaches to understanding the traditional China which still live on in the thinking and patterns of life of the people of rural China today. In rural China, Cao sees much more continuity than any radical break with the past yet the signs of rapid impending change are widespread. For Cao, China's culture and traditions as well as the actual functioning of its rural politics and economy remain rooted in what is still a largely agricultural society. Arises then the painful question confronted by Chinese intellectuals time and again: is Chinese culture an obstacle to modernization? Cao responds that the place of China's traditional pattern of human relationships in the modern age is a very difficult issue. "As a human being I love and cherish this way of living even as my rational mind has its doubts. As an observer and researcher of modern Chinese rural society, I find that it is just these 'personal relationships' that block the development and maturation of politics, the economy and ethics in China and that inhibit the development of the 'individual in society' and the 'awareness that one is a citizen.' Yet as a human being, I want to live amidst these direct and sincere personal relationships." Like a great novel, *Yellow River* can be read on many different levels.

*Yellow River* can be read as an account of rural life in contemporary Henan Province. Cao wears his learning lightly. The reader's understanding of China's rural society and of the pathologies of a system that makes good people knowingly do bad things grows through the accounts of interviews with farmers and local officials, along with a few local Communist Party School scholars.

Names are changed and locations are sometimes made a bit vague to protect the frank. Through interview after interview emerges an economic, political and cultural portrait of China's grassroots and of county government that is, as Cao notes, the Qing Emperor Yongzheng called the foundation of government since it is the closest to the people. Like He Qinglian in the closing chapters of her *Pitfalls of Chinese Modernization*, Cao sees a resurgence of clan power during the two decades since rural reform began. Clan power often determines the selection of local leaders. Cao remarks that villages where one clan is in a large majority often have a good leadership while others with no dominant clan often bring forth leaders who are both authoritarian and ineffective.

What sort of theoretical framework can be used to understand rural China?, asks Cao. In his preface to the second half of *Yellow River*, Cao

writes that an examination of history shows that although over the past half century rural China has seen large changes in its political arrangements, there remains nonetheless a large continuity in the old methods of production, and in social and political relationships. There certainly has been great quantitative change in the coming of much greater prosperity in rural China than it has seen in well over a century but not really qualitative change. Now has appeared that greatest shift in Chinese history.

With reform, once-again liberated Chinese peasants are moving into non-agricultural occupations in the countryside. Will this finally break the great continuity and so overcome the inertia of history? It is still hard to tell. Cao has been trying for some years to create a theoretical framework for understanding rural China. Can it emerge from survey work, or can the theories of Western sociology and cultural studies be employed to create such a framework?

Chinese peasants hate corrupt officials while holding central leaders, including their old favourite Mao Zedong, in near-superstitious awe and respect. However, peasants also run to give gifts to local officials in exchange for favours, thereby taking advantage of and promoting corruption themselves. The relatives and friends of officials are placed in local government organizations, which have continued to multiply over the past two decades, increasing the tax burden on peasants (including the widespread miscellaneous illegal fees) that often reaches 30%, well above the 5% maximum set by the State Council.

In many areas of Henan, rising exactions from local officials faced with unfounded mandates from above and swelling payrolls down below largely stopped peasant real income gains after 1985. Cao notes that ever-swelling local government payrolls that steadily increased farmer tax burdens helped bring down the Qing dynasty.

Throughout the book, Cao stresses that the widespread anger of peasants over the tax burden and the insults they feel from local officials is a central social fact that menaces China's stability. That the peasants are doing much better than twenty years ago and indeed better than at any time for 200 years does not trump these negatives, writes Cao. The increasing gaps between the rich and the poor and the displays of wealth have raised the general view of what is the minimum needed to get by. Cao compares the Chinese peasants to the Yellow River, usually calm but capable of tremendous violence when aroused, and warns that some greedy local officials, misled by the commonly submissive attitude of Chinese peasants may now be pushing them beyond forbearance.

What does Cao see as the thread running through the whole? Throughout Chinese history, peasants have not sought to govern themselves but to find a wise leader to govern on their behalf. Another weakness is that Chinese peasants are often unable to work together on the basis of equality according to a mutual agreement. China lacks civic organizations that can mediate between the family and the state. Where private organizations do exist are organized on the schema of family relationships. People get things done through a web of personal relationships and not through organizations founded on the basis of equality and operating according to rules. The problems of rural China can only be solved when the individual farmers see themselves as actors with rights who can voluntarily associate with others to assert themselves and to create the pressure from below needed to overcome distortions in reform caused by self-seeking local officials.

Cao hopes that the prosperity brought to the countryside by the economic reforms of the past two decades along and the steadily rising cultural influence of urban China in the countryside mediated by mass media such as television but especially by returned migrant workers will result in great changes in the ways of thinking of rural Chinese people.

Cao writes that “if the burden of reform is borne by the workers of the state-owned enterprises and the peasants and the profits are reaped by government and party officials and the owners of private business, then the reforms are taking China away from socialism, not to western-style capitalism but to a uniquely Chinese style of bureaucratism. China may very well be heading that way. This betrays the intention of the planners of reform and also the wishes of those people who are determined that China should become a liberal society. Observing what is really going on in China’s interior, the actual process of reform seems to be bringing China along this third pathway.” Cao sees Chinese local government at every level getting more and more divorced from the people even as it increases the pressure from above. Cao quotes a popular Henan verse on the evolution of the relationship between the people and local officials. “During the 50s, 60s and 70s it was fish and water; during the 1980s it was oil and water; during the 90s it is fire and water.”

*China Along the Yellow River*, now in its third printing, is becoming well-known. There are the summary-translation of the first third of the book (my reading notes) in two documents at <http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/english/sandt/china-along-yellow-river.htm> and <http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/english/sandt/china-yellowriver-pp 243++.html>

\* The views expressed are the personal views of the author not the views of the US Department of State.

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曹錦清：《黃河邊的中國：一個學者對鄉村社會的觀察與思考》，上海：上海文藝出版社，2000年。（*China Along the Yellow River: A Scholar's Observations and Reflections on Rural Society*, by Cao Jinqing, Shanghai: Shanghai Literary and Arts Publishing House, 2000). 772 pp. RMB 34. ISBN 7-5321-2057-0.

Using the standard of any established humanities and social sciences discipline to categorize Cao Jinqing's *China Along the Yellow River* would be futile. The book reads like a collection of mini-ethnographies, but it also has the features of social reportage, once a popular literary form for investigating journalists in the early days of China's reform. But the book is too philosophically and intellectually loaded to be classified as either. The closest genre with which it can be identified is perhaps the writings of the reform-minded American critics of the Gilded Age, such as Henry George (author of *Progress and Poverty*), Edward Bellamy (author of *Looking Backward*), or particularly Henry Demarest Lloyd (author of *Wealth Against Commonwealth*), whose attacks on laissez-faire capitalism laid the intellectual foundation for the Progressive Era at the turn of the twentieth century.

Cao's book is written in the form of a journal that documents, on a daily basis, his 1996 investigations and interviews about life in rural society in Henan province, China's most populous province. Relying on an "unofficial" network of local friends, intellectuals and open-minded officials, Cao was able to independently conduct hundreds of oral interviews with people ranging from peasants of different economic statuses, and village leaders to low-level government officials in several dozens of villages and townships in different counties. The result of this extensive investigation is the 700-plus page book that offers an extraordinarily detailed and vivid portrait of rural society in inland China.

Although Cao vaguely defines the focus of his investigation as "the life of rural China," it is not difficult for one to detect his main concerns: How much has the nation's two-decade-old reform changed rural China?

What is the current status of the relationship between the peasants and their immediate rulers at various local levels? How do the peasants live? How do they think about the changes and how do they deal with them? What are the core values that dominate the mentality and behaviour of rural China? And ultimately, how far is China from becoming a truly modernized nation?

Cao's meticulously recorded interviews, which form the main body of the book, provide answers to all of these questions and perhaps more. But the overall picture of rural Chinese society is not encouraging, even if not completely gloomy. In spite of the rapidly changing skylines in Chinese cities and the high rate of economic growth that has astonished the world, the villages in Henan continue to remain a traditional agrarian society little affected by the coastal and urban economic transformation. For many Henan peasants, traditional farming continues to be their way of living and to be the main and only source of income. The family responsibility system, which initiated rural economic reform in the early 1980s, has now subjected many peasant families to chronic poverty, which is worsened by tax, locally imposed fees of various kinds, and the increasing cost of farming. Tradition continues to dominate the mentality and behaviour of the peasants, as well as local officials who come originally from a peasant background. Even in the famous Nanjie Village (*cun*) — one of few successful village-based enterprises in Henan — it is the traditional moralist leadership that sustains the operation of the supposedly collectivist enterprise (p. 152). The fierce competition for official positions further illustrates how deeply the traditional culture has permeated into the politics of local government. In almost every village Cao visited he would hear complaints about rampant corruption, but no peasants are able to challenge the officials whom they perceive as corrupt, much less to demand their own rights as viable citizens. A combination of party authority, traditional networks based on family and clan, and money reigns supreme in rural society. The majority of the peasant class is permanently marginalized because of the general political, economic, and cultural disempowerment that cuts them off from the decision-making process.

Most valuable of Cao's many thought-provoking reflections that accompany his observations is his insight into the vast gap between the promise of modernization as perceived by those Chinese intellectuals who wholeheartedly embrace the western concepts of democracy and personal autonomy, and the reality that 80% of the Chinese population still live and think as traditional peasants. The core task for rural modernization, argues Cao, is not simply to introduce to the peasants the western conception of

“modern system,” but to transform the peasants into modern citizens and to empower them politically and educationally so that they will have a chance to represent themselves (p. 175). Without such a transformation, the imported foreign ideas, no matter how enchanting they are, will be “no more than scattering oil drops floating above the vast sea of deep-rooted traditional culture and behaviour” (p.77).

Equally striking is Cao’s analogical analysis on the inequalities existing between the coastal and inland regions. In the past two decades the former have moved closer to the promise of globalization while the latter remained rural and backward. The economic backwardness of the inland regions contributes in part to the cut-throat competition in their official circles simply because the government positions are the only available avenues for the ambitious to become rich and powerful. In Cao’s view, the regional inequality creates a domestic version of the First v. Third World contest on the international scene. What is ironic is that China, as a nation, is frequently subjected to the economic and technological (and inevitably political) hegemony of the developed nations in international negotiations, but domestically the coastal regions impose the same hegemony upon the powerless and poor inland regions. With 800 million of its 1.2 billion people continuing to live as traditional peasants and to be deprived of, or voluntarily give up, their rights as citizens, Cao asks, will China ever achieve modernization in any true sense?

Correlated is the issue of “common belief” (*gongtong xinyang*), a term Cao loosely defines as some sort of overarching guideline that “regulate[s] people’s ethical and legal behaviours,” as well as “the relationship between the individual and the social community” (p. 452). The growing disparity in the distribution of wealth, coupled with the market system that favours the rich at the expense of the poor, makes Cao feel deeply concerned about the inevitable ideological and political division that could endanger the future of China’s reform. Any society needs some kind of common belief to provide a cultural, political and intellectual bond among its people, Cao argues; but by pursuing a *laissez-faire* market society without providing necessary institutional and ideological correctives, the Chinese government and intellectuals have already surrendered control of the national ideology, which is now in the hands of the newborn capitalists whose “collective unconsciousness” is marked by nothing but market-driven consumerism and dangerous notions of self-indulgence (p. 193).

It is true that the book is at times repetitive and some of its contents are redundants, but that is almost unavoidable because of the nature of

this kind of writing. The real value of the book lies in the author's courageous and honest questions about the directions and qualities of China's reform, which have not been officially opened up to public debate and discussion.

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劉道義著：《為什麼要廢省？——我國行政區的檢討與調整》。台灣：揚智文化事業股份有限公司，1997。(*Why Do We Have to Abolish the Province?: An Assessment and Adjustment of Administrative Division in Taiwan*, by Liu Tao-yi. Taipei: Yang-Chih Book Co., Ltd., 1997), 260 pp. NT400 (paperback), NT 550 (hardback). ISBN 957-97212-8-9.

This book focuses on one of the most controversial topics in Taiwan: the adjustment of the administrative divisions in Taiwan, especially the abolition of the province of Taiwan under the rule of Taiwan authority. The adjustment of the administrative divisions has significant implications for the division of political power and electoral results of political parties. The author has attempted to approach the problem in a scientific and rational way using the optimal allocation of resources as the basis for analysis and assessment.

The author points out the irregularity of the administrative divisions in Taiwan. The area under the rule of Taiwan authority was 36,181 km<sup>2</sup>, and 98.32% of that area was under the administration of Taiwan province. Thus Taiwan provincial government and Taiwan authority covered almost the same area and their functions were overlapping to a large extent. Nevertheless, there were two municipalities, Taipei and Kaohsiung, under the direct administration of Taiwan authority which enjoyed the same powers as Taiwan province but only covered an area of less than 1% of Taiwan. Based on a detailed analysis of population and area data of various settlements and on fieldwork, the author proposes three basic scenarios for administrative divisions after the abolition of Taiwan province. The most ideal scenario is to divide Taiwan into 22 municipalities and 358 towns/townships.

The book provides a systematic analysis of the administrative divisions in Taiwan, ranging from an overview of the historical evolution of



administrative divisions, conceptual and empirical analyses of rational administrative division for better resource allocation, to an analysis of the changing settlement systems and possible scenarios for the adjustment of administrative divisions in Taiwan.

The book consists of four parts, each with 3–5 chapters. In part one, the author first identified the principles of administrative division. These principles are relatively complete and are illustrated by various cases in Taiwan, mainland China and foreign countries. Based on the statistical analysis of the administrative divisions in the world, the author proposes several empirical formulas for calculating rational population size and the level of administrative divisions. These formulas are useful tools for evaluating and designing administrative divisions but they are influenced by the author's subjective judgement.

The author also criticizes the current system of four-level administrative divisions in Taiwan, with one province and two municipalities at the second level. He compares resource allocation under four different systems, i.e., the Taiwan system with three levels (Taiwan authority as the top level), the pseudo-China system with four levels (Taiwan authority as the top level but also maintaining a province), the China system with four levels (Taiwan becoming a normal province of China), and the "one country, two systems" scenario with four levels (Taiwan as a special administrative region of China with only national defence and foreign affairs handled by Beijing). The first two systems mean that Taiwan maintains its status quo but there is a major difference between the three-level and four-level system. The third and fourth systems assume that Taiwan and mainland China are united and there will be a three-level system in Taiwan and a top level of central government in Beijing. As a Taiwan-based scholar, the author expresses little confidence in the "one country, two systems" scenario. He believes that "one country, two systems" would sooner or later be replaced by the China system with four levels and no special provisions for Taiwan. He is also unable to see the benefits that Taiwan may derive from the booming economy in the mainland after unification.

The second part of the book is a detailed account of the historical evolution of the administrative divisions in Taiwan since 1683, when Taiwan came under the rule of the Qing dynasty. The author traces the origins of Taiwan province, which was formally established in 1887. (Taiwan was part of Fujian province before 1887). There have been adjustments in the administrative divisions since then but the current system with

one province, two municipalities, five cities under the province and 16 counties was finalized in 1982.

The third part of the book focuses on the lower levels of administrative divisions among cities/counties and towns/townships. In Taiwan, the government budget accounts for 31% of GDP and its impact on the living standards of residents is substantial. For this reason, the author attempts to assess whether the relative sizes and boundaries of administrative units are still reasonable and consistent with social, economic and demographic changes, especially since 1950. This involves a careful adjustment of boundary changes of administrative units for estimating the population changes in these units. Furthermore, after careful consideration of the situation of high population density in Taiwan and the experience in many foreign countries such as Japan, the author proposes a set of criteria for the designation of cities and towns. This is followed by a brief overview of 17 daily urban systems and five metropolitan areas as a basis for examining the current administrative divisions. The author argues that the upgrading of Taipei and Kaohsiung to provincial-level municipalities and of Hsinchu and Chiayi to county-level cities was groundless. Empirical data are used to illustrate the problems in the existing administrative divisions in Taiwan.

In part four, the author proposes various scenarios for the adjustment of administrative divisions in Taiwan, based on numerous experimental combinations of basic units. The three basic scenarios are the most ideal system of 22 cities/counties; the most size-balanced system of 33 cities/counties and the geographically most perfect system of six administrative regions. These scenarios are derived with references to the conceptual and empirical analyses of previous chapters but the author also uses his own subjective judgement.

Although the author touches upon political issues such as the unification of Taiwan with mainland China, the arrangement of political elections associated with administrative divisions, and the responsibility of the chief officers in major municipalities, his approach to the problem is mainly based on the boundaries of physical and human geography and the distribution of population and settlements. The author fails to provide a very balanced consideration of the political impact on the administrative divisions. He does not provide much evidence of how the political economy and government administration have been adversely affected by the current irregular administrative divisions in Taiwan.

Despite the above weakness, overall, the author provides an interesting

and detailed analysis of administrative divisions in Taiwan. The book has 49 tables, 55 figures and maps. It will surely be a useful reference book for scholars interested in the history, politics, settlements and administrative divisions of Taiwan.

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胡序威、周一星、顧朝林等著：《中國沿海城鎮密集地區空間集聚與擴散研究》。北京：科學出版社，2000。(*Studies on Spatial Agglomeration and Dispersal in the Coastal Urban Areas in China*, by Hu Xuwei, Zhou Yixing, Gu Chaolin, et al. Beijing: Scientific Press, 2000), xi + 409 pp. RMB 60. ISBN 7-03-008301-6.

This is a big book on a big subject. It has arisen out of a key project funded RMB 1 million, for the first time, by China's National Science Foundation to human and urban geography in 1993. Under the overall coordination of Hu Xuwei of the Institute of Geography under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the project involved the participation of nine research institutes and universities across coastal China, with the participation of over 20 researchers. After three years of close collaboration involving periodic workshops and a clear division of labour, the project was completed in June 1997.

The primary research focus of this book is related to the rapid economic growth since economic reforms were adopted in China, resulting in large-scale rural-urban population migration from the relatively backward interior regions to the flourishing coastal regions, and the simultaneous rapid development of large and small cities. Spatial agglomeration and dispersal has proceeded apace in this evolving environment, exposing contradictions and new questions. An understanding of the mechanisms governing the regularity of urban agglomeration and dispersal with spatial and policy implications forms a major research objective of the project.

The book has selected four main urban and economic clusters along the China coast as the domain for detailed enquiry, namely, the Yangtze River delta, the Pearl River delta, the Beijing-Tianjin-Tangshan area, and Central and Southern Liaoning province. The importance of these areas is reflected in the fact that they account for only 3% of China's land, but 30%

of its urban population and 31% of its GDP. Research into each of these sub-regions under broadly comparable but region-specific frameworks is the responsibility of multiple authors and institutions. If these four sub-regional studies may be viewed as a vertical cut of the research problem, then they are complemented by another four investigations aimed at a horizontal cut across the coastal region on specific themes undertaken by the coordinators of the project.

Against the above background, the book is neatly organized into eight long and substantive chapters. The first four chapters are devoted to a cross-sectional examination of spatial agglomeration and dispersal across several salient subjects. Chapter 1, by Hu Xuwei, deals with spatial agglomeration and dispersal from a macro and evolutionary perspective, paying heed to trends of globalization and recent developments in Pacific Asia. Development trends in the coastal region before 1978 are contrasted with major development breakthroughs in the reform period, with the beginnings of a market economy and relaxation of labour mobility. Comparative data across the four study areas and east-west disparity are presented. Zhou Yixing and Shi Yulong, in Chapter 2, present a comprehensive account of metropolitan areas and their derivatives, metropolitan interlocking regions (MIRs). Historical and recent studies on the subject in Western countries and Asia are reviewed, with special attention given to definitional problems and their relevance to China. On the basis of mutually agreed definitions, the four study areas are compared in their profile of MIRs. In all the study areas, the role of transport in facilitating metropolitan growth is highlighted, with the Shenyang-Dalian transport corridor given a closer examination. The chapter concludes with a theoretical analysis of MIRs and the implications for their management and control. Chapter 3, by Gu Chaolin, focuses on large and medium cities in China under the agglomeration-dispersal framework. It is rich in data, maps, case descriptions and conceptual analyses of recent urban development in China. Data on population mobility are presented on a range of large and medium cities, and data on population density change are shown on some other cities. Economic development zones, especially hi-tech development zones, are shown as avenues along which urban and economic agglomeration have occurred. Beijing is often used to illustrate some of the major ongoing processes in large Chinese cities, such as urban renewal, suburbanization and industrial decentralization. Social polarization has been observed in these Chinese cities, with most interesting data presented on the new phenomena of urban poverty and the urban rich.

Zheng Hongyi authors Chapter 4 which deals with the phenomenon of rural urbanization. It is full of insights into “urbanization from below,” highlighting the role of small towns in the reform period. Much of the chapter is devoted to an analysis of the data and results of the 1995 survey of 28 village towns in Jiangyin City in Jiangsu province. The analysis reveals that the city witnessed a transformation in the 1990s, as manifested in structural changes, a decline in agricultural income, a rapid increase in tertiary industry and an influx of “outside” labour. Pollution is one serious problem that has resulted from rural industrialization. The chapter concludes with a discussion of policy issues and management, with particular reference to population, production structure, land use, construction and housing, and capital protection.

The second half of the book, also in four chapters and of comparable length, covers the four study sub-regions. Some of these chapters involve multiple authorships and institutional participation. Their common research framework is always clear, but leeway is allowed for region-specific characteristics to be emphasized. For example, in Chapter 5 on the Pearl River delta, six urban agglomerations (Guangzhou-Foshan, Hong Kong-Shenzhen, Macao-Zhuhai, Jiangmen, Huizhou, and Zhaoqing) are described, as well Dongguan and Shunde as case studies of rural urbanization. Chapter 6 presents an exposé of regional development in the Yangtze River delta, followed by instructive development profiles of Shanghai, Nanjing, Suzhou, and Hangzhou. The maps in this chapter are the best in the volume, being of larger size and reflecting good cartographic skills. Chapter 7 focuses on the Beijing-Tianjin-Tangshan sub-region. Comparative profiles of the three cities are provided in an analysis of the sub-region as a functional entity. This is complemented by individual accounts of the three cities in their recent development, including suburbanization in Beijing, development zones in Tianjin as a measure to accelerate development, and urban reconstruction in Tangshan, which was devastated by a massive earthquake in July 1976. Chapter 8 presents a very comprehensive picture of Central and Southern Liaoning in almost every aspect of interest in the project. It details the evolution and development of the metropolitan interlocking region, with special attention given to Shenyang and Dalian. The study of suburbanization in the two cities is worthy of mention, because the process, while similar to what occurred in Western cities, has taken on a distinctive Chinese character.

Overall, this book represents the most comprehensive attempt to grapple with a subject of much theoretical and practical value in urban

and development studies. It has assembled probably the best team of researchers in China on the subject, as most of them have a high scholarly reputation and are very familiar with the issues being addressed in their own sub-region. The cross-sectional or horizontal studies are notable because of the conscious efforts having been made to take note of important theoretical and empirical developments in Western countries. The whole volume is internally consistent across the chapters, despite the large number of researchers and institutions in question. Certainly, the workshops and other meetings of the researchers during the study period have been helpful in ensuring the fulfilment of research goals. The result is a highly commendable book which is conceptually and theoretically strong, at the same time full of valuable data, analyses, maps, tables and insights in the four study sub-regions. It will remain a major reference volume on the subject.

Notwithstanding the many strengths of the book, one can fault it on several counts. As shown in Map 1.3 on page 23, the authors have covered in this study only four of the six urban clusters in coastal China. The urban complexes in the Shandong peninsula and coastal Fujian are not covered, resulting in obvious gaps in this project. With the exception of the map cited above which carries a scale, all maps in the book suffer from the lack of a scale and a direction arrow. Despite the availability of a very detailed English summary in 18 pages at the end of the book, it sorely lacks an index, rendering cross referencing and follow-up work difficult. This is a common inadequacy of Chinese books published in the mainland which, after slowly adopting an improved format of referencing as shown in this volume, has yet to be remedied.

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*American Goddess at the Rape of Nanking: The Courage of Minnie Vautrin*, by Hua-ling Hu, with a Foreword by Paul Simon. Carbondale and Edwardsville, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000. xxiv + 184 pp. US\$24.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-8093-2303-6.

During the Nanking Massacre of 1937–1938, about a dozen Westerners, at the risk of their own lives, defied the Japanese army and saved the lives of

thousands of Chinese civilians. Minnie Vautrin (1886–1941), as the only female member of the International Committee for the Nanking Safety Zone, devoted herself to the unique and dangerous mission of protecting Chinese women from the invading Japanese soldiers. Out of their gratitude to Vautrin, many of the refugees came to call her their “Living Goddess.” Due to the cold war politics of the world following WWII, however, the Nanking Massacre became what some call a “forgotten holocaust” (Iris Chang’s 1997 *The Rape of Nanking*). As a result, as in the case of other Western heroes in the massacre, the story of Vautrin was buried in the memory of a dwindling number of survivors, and the documents about her heroic deeds were left collecting dust in the archives of Yale University. Hua-ling Hu’s *American Goddess at the Rape of Nanking* is the first complete biography of Minnie Vautrin. (An earlier Chinese version of the book was published in 1997 in Taiwan.) As such, it is not only a welcome part of an ongoing, albeit long overdue, academic effort to do history justice, but also a valuable contribution to the current discourse on Japan’s war memories.

The preface of the book tells us how some good luck put the author in possession of the three primary sources of information upon which the substance of the entire book is built: Vautrin’s diary from June 1937 to April 1940, her correspondence from 1919 to shortly before her death in 1941, and a village historian’s account of a century (1857–1957) in Secor, Illinois, Vautrin’s birthplace and home until the early 1920s.

The body of the book consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 begins with an account of Vautrin’s childhood in a small midwest farm village, and of how she worked her way through college majoring in education. The author places Vautrin’s college years in the context of the fever of American foreign missions. It was in the midst of such a fever in 1912 that Vautrin found herself assigned the task of creating a girls’ school in Hefei, China, thus beginning her 28 years of service in that country. Chapter 2 continues the story of her service in China, now in Ginling College, Nanking, where she was to witness the massacre. Chapter 3 pieces together the complicated picture of China’s internal chaos up to the mid-1930s. Against this background, it also traces the history of Japan’s territorial ambitions in China, which eventually led to a full-scale invasion of China, launched “before the country became too united and too powerful” (p. 59).

The most engaging part of the book comes in the next two chapters. Chapter 4 presents a broad picture of the “Barbaric Rape of Nanking” by

the Japanese army and of the operation of the Safety Zone. Chapter 5 meticulously reconstructs Vautrin's activities and observations before and during the Japanese occupation of the city. The concluding chapter tells the sad story of Vautrin's last days: how she suffered severe fatigue and depression and how, in May 1941 and back in the United States, she ended her own life thinking herself a failure.

As pointed out in the foreword, one contribution the book makes is its discovery of a noble heroine (p. xiii). Not only did Vautrin choose to stay in Nanking despite repeated warnings from the American Embassy against it, but she also devoted all her energy to a "people's school" programme to help the poor Chinese women left helpless in the aftermath of the massacre (pp. 116–20).

The most important contribution of the book is an obvious one: its vivid reconstruction of what transpired during the terrible months of the massacre. As the reconstruction is based entirely on Vautrin's day-by-day record of her own personal involvement, often supported by other sources such as John Rabe's diary, it leaves no room for dispute as to the occurrence and the massive scale of the event. The following entries in her diary, for example, could hardly have been written by anyone who did not witness the massacre: "Tonight, I look 60 and feel 80" (p. 74); "The tragedies that come to us each day! I pray I may not become hardened and indifferent" (p. 113).

Much has been published in recent years on the Nanking Massacre. Examples include the series of books published in China by Zhang Kaiyuan and the works by Honda Katsuichi and others in Japan. Some of this literature has been marred by sweeping statements on Japan's road to Nanking and postwar Japan's hiding of the past. (Joshua Vogel's review of Iris Chang's bestseller in *Journal of Asian Studies*.) *American Goddess* is a book by a trained historian intent on showing her admiration for and gratitude to Vautrin by drawing on what evidence she could find in documented sources in the hopes that "the Nanking holocaust will never repeat itself in any place on this earth" (p. xxi).

The book is written in lucid English with its contents nicely illustrated by 19 photos. It is an engaging story of how a girl who grew up in a small farm village in Illinois emerged half a world away as an "American Goddess" during one of the most infamous episodes of the twentieth century. At the same time and perhaps more importantly, it will also prompt the reader to think about such deeper issues as the world's cold war politics, Japan's war memories, and above all, what is true justice in



history. I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in Sino-Japanese relations in general and in Japan's war memories in particular.

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*Remaking the Chinese City: Modernity and National Identity, 1900–1950*, edited by Joseph W. Esherick. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000. x + 278 pp. US\$65.00 (Hardcover). ISBN 0-8248-2148-3.

In the past two decades our knowledge and understanding of Chinese cities have been greatly expanded and revised. New frontiers have opened, novel sources have been discovered, and the relations between urban and rural have been re-examined. *Remaking the Chinese City*, edited by Joseph Esherick, is an excellent addition to this growing body of scholarship dealing with urban history.

An outgrowth of a 1996 conference entitled “Beyond Shanghai: Imagining the City in Republican China,” the book is divided into three parts: an introduction, ten chapters on individual Chinese cities, and two concluding commentaries. Esherick's illuminating opening essay, which sets the tone and frames the issues, provides an extremely useful and thoughtful introduction to the two principal themes under investigation: modernity and national identity of Chinese cities during the Republican era. The ten chapters that follow explore Canton (Michael Tsin), Tianjin (Ruth Rogaski and Brett Sheehan), Changchun (David Buck), Chengdu (Kristin Stapleton), Hangzhou (Liping Wang), Beijing (Madeleine Yue Dong), Nanjing (Charles Musgrove), Wuhan (Stephen MacKinnon), and Chongqing (Lee McIsaac). The two concluding essays are by Jeffrey Wasserstrom and David Strand.

Space considerations make it impossible to do justice to the rich and diverse issues addressed in this volume. Instead, this review focuses on a few of its overall strengths and weaknesses. *Remaking the Chinese City* differs from its predecessors in a number of significant ways. As amply announced in the title of the conference on which the book is based, the content of this volume moves beyond Shanghai, a metropolis much investigated, into hitherto unexplored cities in China. As such, it wisely expands the scope of study of urban history.

The essays are linked by a common theme, namely, the struggle taking place in cities for (and between) nation and modernity (p. 1). The result is an impressive achievement. Supported by meticulous research and scrupulous attention to detail, the contributors judiciously recount the modernist agenda of city reformers, analyze crucial urban reforms (e.g., hygiene, public works, transportation, and education), and examine the multiple identities of the modern Chinese city (e.g., a tourist attraction combined with a distinct Chinese city, as in the case of Hangzhou). Among the most compelling pieces are Buck's chapter on the building of Changchun as a grand capital by the Japanese colonizers and Rogaski's chapter on Tianjin's modern hygienic programme.

Another virtue of the book is the contributors' attempt, albeit with uneven success, to compare the development of Chinese cities. Musgrove, for instance, draws interesting parallels between Nanjing, a Nationalist capital in the 1920s, and Washington, D.C. Clearly and admirably, Esherick and the contributors understand that the study of Chinese cities will yield better results when related to larger, global questions. The challenge, of course, is to unearth shared themes without losing sight of fundamental differences between Chinese cities and their Western counterparts.

The prose is generally straightforward and relatively free of pretension, with the exception of occasional jargon adopted from Foucault. Further, in addition to the variety of individual contributions, the book is supplemented by numerous instructive illustrations — maps, photographs, and building plans — adding a visual dimension to the arguments and providing a delightful aid to readers.

An ambitious project such as this has its inevitable share of shortcomings. The essays are uneven in quality. With its emphasis on modernity and inadequate attention given to national identity, treatment of the two central themes is unbalanced. Further, the term *modernity*, essential to the book, is used loosely by the authors without a clear consensus as to what it actually means. Some use the term to mean the ability to introduce concepts of modern hygiene and to prevent disease; to others, it indicates the cosmopolitan professionalism of modern-day bankers; and still others see it as the creation of a new urban identity.

The book focuses more on urban forms and designs, and the physical appearance of cities, but pays insufficient attention to the lives of men and women living in the modern city and to the possibilities and perils they have faced. In his seminal 1937 essay, "What Is a City?" Lewis Mumford

argued cogently that it is woefully inadequate to define a city only in terms of its population size, physical design, or economic functions. On the contrary, he argues, a city's human face lies at the core of any urban form. Were Chinese city planners aware of Engels's earlier warning about the plight of the urban poor in a modern industrial city? This volume, I believe, would be enriched by inquiries into the lives of urbanites, detailing, perhaps, how they coped with uncertainties and excitement as their cities were reshaped under the weight of inexorable drives towards modernization.

Esherick correctly argues that "the reorganization of urban space was a fundamental part of the modernist agenda" (p. 9), and the volume has indeed devoted extensive space to city planning, architectural design, and urban reconstruction. The actual consequences of this reorganization, however, are inadequately discussed by the contributors. In fact, the modernist agenda does not necessarily bring about planned progress. "Many cities," as Spiro Kostof has convincingly demonstrated in his *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History* (1991), "come about without benefit of designers, or once designed, set about instantly to adapt themselves to the rituals of everyday life and the vagaries of history" (p. 12). Did the construction of modern Chinese cities in the Republican period introduce a Weberian type of life — order, precision, punctuality, and coordination — into these cities, or, as in Durkheim's view, did it cause primarily disorder, community breakdown, and anomie? We have yet to find out.

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*Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900*, by Susan Naquin. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000. xxxiv + 816 pp. \$80.00 (hardcover). ISBN 0-5202-1991-0.

Peking! With its long and romantic history, its colourful and distinctive culture, and its special role in the collective Chinese psyche, it is surely one of the world's unique cities. Even its uninviting climate — winters are dry and bitterly cold, unpleasant dust storms swirl in the spring and baking heat sears the summer skies — has not diminished its unquestioned position both

within and outside of the country as the single most important city in China.

Susan Naquin describes Peking during the Ming (1368–1644) when powerful eunuchs surrounded the emperor and highly educated scholars fell to factional infighting over issues of doctrine involving philosophical schools and theories of government. She also explains the city during the Qing (1644–1911) when the conquering Manchu banner elite forced Han Chinese to move out of the Inner City (*neicheng*), the walled enclosure immediately surrounding the Imperial City (*huangcheng*) where many official residences and buildings were situated, and thus engendered a restructuring of the economic and power dynamics within the walls of both the Inner City and the southern extension of the walls called the Outer City (*waicheng*).

As a central theme by which to grasp some of the patterns in the mosaic of Peking over the five hundred years covered by her study, Professor Naquin has selected religious temples as her point of reference. She describes something of the hagiography of the gods honoured in these temples (indeed, Part One of the book on the organization of popular religion and temples in pre-modern urban China could in and of itself constitute an excellent and useful book if published as a separate volume) and she outlines the activities of all the major religious groups in Peking, including Buddhists, Taoists, Tibetan Buddhists, the generic gods of popular Chinese religion, Moslems, Christians, and various Christian sects including the Russian Orthodox church. The importance of these religious establishments was that, in a culture which carefully proscribed and controlled the public sphere, they acted as approved easily accessible spaces where people from differing economic and social classes could freely interact. Individuals from varied backgrounds might gather around a temple to cooperate in raising funds for its reconstruction and upkeep or to undertake a joint pilgrimage in honour of a worshipped deity. But equally so, people could gather there to talk in an unsupervised, even somewhat anonymous, setting. This was especially true for the regular markets that took place in temple courtyards. Even beyond the free-wheeling social interaction offered by the temple markets, vendors and stalls frequently spilled out into the streets surrounding the temple site, contributing to the city's vigorous and bustling economic life.

Under the Qing the inclusive activities of Peking's temples helped to integrate the once somewhat segregated Manchu bannermen with the more numerous Han Chinese who also lived in the city. By investigating the people who subscribed to various temple projects and who often recorded

their names on commemorative stele, Naquin shows the increasing degree of interaction between these two ethnic groups. She pays particular attention to the fortunes of the Manchus because, as she rightly points out, they contributed very directly to the creation of modern Peking culture. For example, the language they came to speak is now labelled Mandarin Chinese, and the stories they particularly enjoyed, a rough-and-tumble martial theatre, are now known as Peking Opera.

In 1900 several thousand foreign troops entered Peking to quell the Boxer uprising, and Naquin decided to end her story at that point, when clearly an older way of life would no longer be able to continue as before. In the 1950s the government of Mao Zedong, determined to show that they were stronger than all of the deities residing in the temples, deliberately turned the temples into schools, libraries and warehouses, or let them fall into severe disrepair. Professor Naquin's book, in contrast, tells of a Peking where colourful temples abounded. She claims that between 1400 and 1900, Peking had more than 2,500 temples. When I did some sleuthing in Peking in 1997 to discover if a number of smaller former temples still existed, I found that many are remembered only in being the name of a bus stop. But I also found that in some cases the old temple buildings, for the past several decades claimed by squatters, still stand and their former religious function is clear. Desire for the tourist dollar is helping give new life to several of these old sites and thus preserving something of the Peking described in this book.

Naquin realizes that using the name Peking might be considered politically incorrect these days and she of course knows that Beijing is the official designation (her book otherwise uses pinyin romanization). She points out that in Chinese the city had a number of names during the Ming and Qing, and in common usage was often simply called the capital city (*jingshi*), but variants of the English name Peking have actually been used fairly consistently by foreigners ever since 1642. Besides, for Naquin the word Peking conjures up the mystery and romanticism and excitement of China in a way that no other word can do. I join her in that enthusiasm.

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