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## Reviews (II)

by  
various authors

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## CONTENTS

## Invited Reviews

- William G. Boltz, "The Typological Analysis of the Chinese Script." A-1  
A review article of John DeFrancis, *Visible Speech, the Diverse Oneness of Writing Systems*.
- Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao, eds., *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. A-9  
Reviewed by William R. LaFleur.
- Vladimir N. Basilov, ed., *Nomads of Eurasia*. Reviewed by David A. Utz. A-11

## Reviews by the Editor

- "Philosophy and Language." B-1  
A review article of François Jullien, *Procès ou Création: Une introduction à la pensée des lettrés chinois*.

## Language and Linguistics

- W. South Coblin, *A Handbook of Eastern Han Sound Glosses*. B-5
- Weldon South Coblin. *A Sinologist's Handlist of Sino-Tibetan Lexical Comparisons*. B-6
- ZHOU Zhenhe and YOU Rujie. *Fangyan yu Zhongguo Wenhua [Topolects and Chinese Culture]*. B-7
- CHOU Fa-kao. *Papers in Chinese Linguistics and Epigraphy*. B-10
- ZENG Zifan. *Guangzhouhua Putonghua Duibi Qutan [Interesting Parallels between Cantonese and Mandarin]*. B-13
- Luciana Bressan. *La Determinazione delle Norme Ortografiche del Pinyin*. B-13
- JIANG Shaoyu and XU Changhua, tr. *Zhongguoyu Lishi Wenfa [A Historical Grammar of Modern Chinese]* by ŌTA Tatsuo. B-15
- Keith McMahon, et al. *Expository Writing in Chinese*. B-16
- P. C. Tung and D. E. Pollard. *Colloquial Chinese*. B-17
- LI Sijing, *Hanyu "er" [ ㄝ ] Yin Shih Yanjiu [Studies on the History of the "er" { ㄝ } Sound in Sinitic]*. B-17
- Maurice Coyaud, *Les langues dans le monde chinois*. B-20
- Patricia Herbert and Anthony Milner, eds., *South-East Asia: Languages and Literatures; A Select Guide*. B-22

- Andrew Large, *The Artificial Language Movement*. B-22
- Wilhelm von Humboldt, *On Language: The Diversity of Human Language-Structure and Its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind*. B-25
- Vitaly Shevoroshkin, ed., *Reconstructing Languages and Cultures*. B-26
- Jan Wind, et al., eds., *Studies in Language Origins*.

## Short Notices

- A. Kondratov, *Sounds and Signs*. B-27
- Jeremy Campbell, *Grammatical Man: Information, Entropy, Language, and Life*. B-28
- Pitfalls of the Tetragraphic Script. B-28

## Lexicography and Lexicology

- MIN Jiayi, et al., comp., *Hanyu Xinci Cidian [A Dictionary of New Sinitic Terms]* B-29
- LYU Caizhen, et al., comp., *Xiandai Hanyu Nanci Cidian [A Dictionary of Difficult Terms in Modern Sinitic]*. B-30
- Tom McArthur, *Worlds of Reference: Lexicography, learning and language from the clay tablet to the computer*. B-31

## A Bouquet of Pekingese Lexicons

- JIN Shoushen, comp., *Beijingshua Yuhui [Pekingese Vocabulary]*. B-33
- SONG Xiaocai and MA Xinhua, comp., *Beijingshua Ciyu Lishi [Pekingese Expressions with Examples and Explanations]*.
- SONG Xiaocai and MA Xinhua, comp., *Beijingshua Yuci Huishi [Pekingese Words and Phrases with Explanations]*.
- FU Min and GAO Aijun, comp., *Beijingshua Ciyu (Dialectical Words and Phrases in Beijing)*.

## A Bibliographical Trilogy

- Paul Fu-mien Yang, comp., *Chinese Linguistics: A Selected and Classified Bibliography*. B-36
- Paul Fu-mien Yang, comp., *Chinese Dialectology: A Selected and Classified Bibliography*.
- Paul Fu-mien Yang, comp., *Chinese Lexicology and Lexicography: A Selected and Classified Bibliography*.

## Orality and Literacy

- Jack Goody. *The interface between the written and the oral.* B-37
- Jack Goody. *The logic of writing and the organization of society.*
- Deborah Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy.* B-39

## Society and Culture

- Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon, *Tiananmen Square.* B-43
- Thomas H. C. Lee, *Government Education and Examinations in Sung China.* B-44
- ZHANG Zhishan, tr. and ed., *Zhongguo zhi Xing [Record of a Journey to China].* B-45
- LIN Wushu, *Monijiao ji Qi Dongjian [Manichaeism and Its Eastward Expansion].* B-47
- E. N. Anderson, *The Food of China.* B-48
- K. C. Chang, ed., *Food in Chinese Culture: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives.*
- Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures.* B-51
- D. E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology.*

## Short Notice

- Robert Jastrow, *The Enchanted Loom: Mind in the Universe.* B-53

In Memoriam  
Chang-chen HSU  
August 6, 1957 - June 27, 1989

- Hsu Chang-chen, ed., and tr., *Yin-tu hsien-tai hsiao-shuo hsüan [A Selection of Contemporary Indian Fiction].* C-1
- Hsu Chang-chen, *T'o-fu tzu-hui yen-chiu (Mastering TOEFL Vocabulary).*
- Hsu Chang-chen, *Tsui-chung-yao-te i pai ke Ying-wen tzu-shou tzu-ken (100 English Prefixes and Word Roots).*
- Hsu Chang-chen, *Fa-wen tzu-hui chieh-kou fen-hsi -- tzu-shou yü tzu-ken (Les préfixes et les racines de la langue française).*
- Hsu Chang-chen, comp. and tr., *Hsi-yü yü Fo-chiao wen-shih lun-chi (Collection of Articles on Studies of Central Asia, India, and Buddhism).*

## Invited Reviews

## The Typological Analysis of the Chinese Script

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A review article of:

John DeFrancis. *Visible Speech, the Diverse Oneness of Writing Systems*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989. Pp. xiv + 306.

The appearance in 1952 of the late I. J. Gelb's now classic *A Study of Writing* marked a very sharply defined turning point in the history of the study of scripts and writing systems, a subject that, following Gelb, we ought properly to call *grammatology*. While there were, to be sure, numerous important studies by serious scholars before Gelb's book, still it is fair to acknowledge that Gelb brought a fundamentally new and different approach and purpose to his subject.<sup>1</sup> He tried to establish an analysis of writing systems that was both typological and historical, integrating the one with the other to produce a kind of unified general theoretical account of what he seems to have wished to see as the monogenesis of all writing systems of the ancient world, including China. Gelb may have been a little over-generous in allowing for the possibility of a common origin for the scripts of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China alike, but he set the subject of the study of writing on a firmer scientific and theoretical basis than it had theretofore enjoyed. No longer was it enough to produce merely descriptive accounts of unusual (to the European eye) writing systems, or comparative charts of sets of related scripes. Some kind of deeper questions were to be asked, and more substantial statements about the nature of writing were expected.

Where Gelb's own work drew upon typological classification and historical analysis in approximately equal parts, most subsequent studies of writing are either one or the other, that is, they are either primarily typological studies, showing only incidental interest in the historical aspects of the development of writing, or they are concerned principally just with the origin and development of scripts, and do not include typological classification. Professor DeFrancis's *Visible Speech* falls within the first of these two kinds; it is mainly a typological study, and its historical component is distinctly secondary. DeFrancis has nothing in particular new to tell us about the historical aspects of the origin and development of writing nor does he treat this subject with more than passing mention. Because he discusses several ancient languages' writing systems, e.g., Egyptian, Sumerian, and Phoenician, he must per force comment to some extent on the historical development of these scripts, but this is not his primary concern. He does, by contrast, have something very new to propose about the typological classification of writing, in particular about the nature of the Chinese script, and here we find ideas and suggestions that are original and provocatively unconventional.

For two or more generations serious students of Chinese, DeFrancis included, have tried assiduously to combat the widespread misperception of the Chinese script as "ideographic", calling attention to the fact that no script, Chinese or other, can represent ideas directly, and that all scripts, Chinese included, convey meaning through the medium of speech, that is, scripts represent the *sounds* of a language, and meaning only as associated with those sounds.<sup>2</sup> As it happens, Chinese, we argued, represents speech at the level of the word, not the syllable or the single sound as syllabaries and alphabets do respectively, and therefore because those words that are represented by the Chinese characters have meanings, it *looks like* those characters stand for ideas. Actually, it is the words that stand for the ideas, and the characters are standing only for the words. We therefore insisted that the correct term for the Chinese characters was not 'ideograph', but

*logograph*, or the less common but equally applicable term *lexigraph*, and that ideas were associated directly with words, and only indirectly through the medium of the word with characters.

Now just when we have become more sanguine than ever we dared to be that this annoying misperception about the Chinese writing system is yielding ground to a more mature, accurate, and sensible understanding of the nature of Chinese characters, and that the obnoxious and silly term 'ideograph' is finally giving way to 'logograph', Professor DeFrancis devotes two-hundred or more pages to establishing a typological scheme for writing systems that entails the proposition that the Chinese script ought not be called 'logographic' after all, and that we misunderstand the fundamental structure of Chinese writing when we think of it as representing speech at the level of the word.

DeFrancis does not actually spend the entire two-hundred pages discussing Chinese; rather he lays out a comprehensive typological scheme by which he intends to account for all known writing systems, and gives examples and explanations for each type. It just happens that the important original contribution of his endeavor lies with his explanation and classification of the Chinese script. What he illustrates with most of the other scripts he mentions does not break in any major way with conventional and accepted understanding in the way that his analysis of Chinese does. DeFrancis does not admit the possibility, except perhaps in theory, of a logographic writing system for Chinese or for any language. Such a system, he argues, would by definition mean that virtually every word of the language had a unitary graphic representation distinct from all others in the writing system, something that DeFrancis deems impossible if meant literally, and certainly not the case for Chinese. How then does his analysis, or perhaps we should say his perception and understanding, of the Chinese script differ from other informed opinion to such an extent that he can deny even the possibility of the label 'logographic'? The answer to this question lies in what DeFrancis sees as the "fundamental" level of speech represented by the writing system.

In discussing levels of representation and units of script DeFrancis defines two terms that stand in a hierarchical relation to each other, the *grapheme* and the *frame*. A *grapheme* is "[t]he meaningless graphic unit that corresponds to the smallest segment of speech represented in the writing system." This is the "basic operational unit" of the script. A *frame* on the other hand is "[t]he basic unit of writing that is surrounded by white space on the printed page." (p. 54) DeFrancis's definition and use of the term *grapheme* is fairly standard, and not original here. Another way it is sometimes put is to say that the grapheme is the minimal contrastive unit of the writing system. This makes the intended parallel with the definition of the phoneme in the phonological domain clear. We can then talk about what Gleason calls the *fit* between the units of the script and the units of speech thus represented, i.e., the fit between, for example, graphemes and phonemes in alphabetic systems.<sup>3</sup> DeFrancis's use of the term *frame* is a little more idiosyncratic, and, I think, a little less satisfactorily defined. Notice the difference between the two definitions: a grapheme is defined in terms either of its contrastive role vis-à-vis other elements of the writing system, or of its relation to speech, but the frame is defined only in reference to "white space", i.e., to the somewhat arbitrary conventions of print layout on a page. This seems to me to fail to invest the notion of the frame with any theoretically significant underpinnings.

DeFrancis's move away from the term 'logographic' as the appropriate typological designation for the Chinese script arises from his claim that it is the grapheme, not the frame, that is the fundamental and definitive unit of a writing system. Chinese frames, i.e., characters, may well be logographic, but they are not the basic operational units of the script, and therefore whether they are logographic or not is irrelevant to the proper classification of the script and to an understanding of how it operates. English frames are generally logographs as well, but no one claims that English is written in a logographic script (but see below, endnote 14). This is so because the frames in English are transparently constituted of smaller graphic components, what DeFrancis would call graphemes, representing lower levels of speech, i.e., single sounds, not words or syllables. So we say English is written with an alphabet.

No one can deny that the vast majority of Chinese characters (frames) are made up of smaller

graphic elements (DeFrancis's graphemes in part, but not in toto; see endnote 11.) Those smaller units are the basic operational units of the Chinese writing system just as the letters of the alphabet are for English, irrespective of the fact that in both cases combinations of these smaller units produce frames that are logographs. In other words, DeFrancis's argument is, simply put, that when we call Chinese 'logographic' and English 'alphabetic' we are not talking about the same level in each case. In the former we are characterizing the script at the level of the frame, and in the latter at the level of the grapheme.

Consider the following Chinese frames (characters): 揚, 楊, and 陽. They are all perfectly homophonous, each is pronounced *yáng*. Yet each represents a word (or morpheme) different from the others; the first is *yáng* 'raise up', the second is *yáng* 'poplar tree', and the third is *yáng* 'sunshine'. In DeFrancis's view the grapheme 陽 is the basic unit of each of these three frames, and stands for the syllable *yáng* irrespective of meaning, i.e., irrespective of which *word* pronounced *yáng* is intended. The word, and its associated meaning, is determined in the written forms by secondary, auxiliary graphic elements at the level of the frame. These are the so-called "radicals", or more properly, *classifiers*; in this case the 'hand' classifier, the 'tree' classifier, and the 'hillside' classifier, respectively. It is because of character (=frame) structures like these, which he recognizes as typical of the Chinese writing system overall, that DeFrancis argues that the script is not logographic, but a kind of syllabary.

DeFrancis has already adumbrated this argument in his earlier book referred to above (endnote 2) when he introduced the term *morphosyllabic* as his preferred description of the Chinese script (pp. 88, 125-126 of the 1984 book), a term unmistakably reminiscent of the late Y.R. Chao's description of the Chinese script as *morpheme-syllable* writing.<sup>4</sup> Unlike Chao, when DeFrancis uses the term *morphosyllabic* he seems to intend a sense analogous to *morphophonemic*, that is, a term in the orthographic realm that mediates the disjuncture between the syllable and the morpheme just as a morphophoneme in the phonological realm is understood to mediate the comparable disjuncture between phoneme and morpheme. This parallel is at least implied by the chart and labels on page 58, where a "meaning-plus-sound" syllabic system of writing is equated with a *morphosyllabic* system, and a "meaning-plus-sound" phonemic system of writing is similarly equated with a *morphophonemic* system, and also on page 79 where in connection with comments on the Sumerian writing system he says that instead of calling the Sumerian script 'morphophonemic' he prefers "given the basically syllabic nature of the system . . . the term *morphosyllabic*" (emphasis original). DeFrancis is, in other words, trying with his term *morphosyllabic* to deal with the intuitively undeniable perception of the Chinese writing system as in some sense writing syllables without reference to meaning, and in another equally pronounced sense writing syllables with associated meanings, i.e., morphemes.

Chinese has traditionally been viewed as a monosyllabic language, by which it is usually meant that all words, or more precisely, all morphemes, are single syllables. The validity of this claim would inevitably entail the validity of the converse, viz., that all syllables in the language are morphemes, i.e., have an associated meaning. DeFrancis in his 1984 book effectively marshalled the pertinent evidence and arguments against the monosyllabic claim, or monosyllabic "myth", as it has come to be known, and showed how it is misleading or inaccurate to describe Chinese as monosyllabic. (Pp. 177-188 and passim.) Still, no less a linguist and logician than Y. R. Chao said of the monosyllabic myth that "so far as Classical Chinese and its writing system is concerned, the monosyllabic myth is one of the truest myths in Chinese mythology."<sup>5</sup> And it is, of course, precisely the writing system with which DeFrancis is concerned.

Chao is able to refer to the writing system as 'morphemic', 'logographic', and 'morpheme-syllabic', without, apparently, sensing any inconsistency or internal contradiction in the more or less interchangeable use of these descriptives. But DeFrancis, as we have said, rejects the terms 'logographic' and 'morphemic' as accurate descriptions of the Chinese script, preferring instead 'morphosyllabic'. The difference between Chao and DeFrancis in this regard comes down to this basic question: is there or is there not a genuine disjuncture between something we call a syllable, or a syllabic level, on the one hand, and a morpheme, or morphemic level, on the other

that is in some meaningful way mediated by a morphosyllabic form of writing, as the two levels phoneme and morpheme are mediated by morphophonemes?

The direct answer to this question is, I think, no, there is not. If we accept with Chao the characterization of Chinese, at least Classical Chinese and its writing system, as monosyllabic, then we cannot but conclude that all syllables that exist in the language are ipso facto morphemes, i.e., there is no possible distinction between a syllable and a morpheme, so there can consequently be no possible distinction, or disjuncture, to mediate.<sup>6</sup> Thus, DeFrancis's morphosyllabic script is in fact tantamount to Chao's morphemic script, and, more loosely, but still correctly, to the more widely recognized term 'logographic script'.<sup>7</sup> The designation *morphosyllabic* to describe Chinese writing is no better motivated in principle than the usual terms 'morphemic' and 'logographic'. The claim that for Chinese there is a speech element called the *syllable*, distinct from a morpheme, that is represented by a grapheme as the basic operational unit of the script just as there is a speech element in English called, e.g., the *morphophoneme* that is represented by a grapheme as the basic operational unit of the English alphabet breaks down because where we can readily define and identify with complete precision the morphophoneme for English, we cannot define with any precision at all the syllable for Chinese, save to identify it with the morpheme. Therefore in Chinese, syllabic writing is de facto morphemic writing, and thus to call it *morphosyllabic* is correct, but not fundamentally different from calling it logographic or morphemic.

If this is so, how then do we explain the 昂 grapheme standing ostensibly for the syllable *yáng* in the three characters given above? The answer to this is that the grapheme 昂 does not stand for a syllable *yáng* distinct from a morpheme *yáng* at all, but for (in this limited case) the three homophonous morphemes *yáng* 'raise up', *yáng* 'poplar', and *yáng* 'sunshine' simultaneously and ambiguously. Apart from some context we cannot know which of the three morphemes pronounced *yáng* the grapheme is intended to write. It is precisely the function of the secondary graphic elements that become attached to the basic grapheme to provide a graphic context to resolve this ambiguity. These secondary elements are, of course, what are typically called semantic determinatives, or semantic classifiers, or more popularly, but incorrectly, "radicals".<sup>8</sup>

There is a priori no reason not to allow a single grapheme to represent more than one morpheme in the writing system. In fact it is perfectly natural to do so, just as it is natural to allow a single grapheme in the English writing system to represent more than one phoneme. The grapheme <s>, for example, stands for the two phonemes /s/ and /z/ in English orthography, witness *cats* (<s> = /s/) and *dogs* (<s> = /z/). It is precisely this kind of thing, and the unreasonableness of writing the plural of *dog* as *dogz*, that makes the English writing system best described as morphophonemic. The grapheme <s> stands for the morphophoneme {s}, which in turn has the set of phonemic realizations /s/ and /z/. DeFrancis is, of course, well aware of this as it applies to English. He does not admit the parallel with his graphemes in Chinese.

We could phrase this analysis as: the grapheme <s> stands for the set of phonemes [/s/, /z/], where the intended phoneme is always predictable from context, but not in isolation. That is, for the grapheme when written *s* in isolation we cannot know whether the intended phonemic realization ought to be /s/ or /z/.<sup>9</sup> In exactly the same way we cannot know whether the grapheme 昂 when written in isolation stands for *yáng* to 'raise up', *yáng* 'poplar', or *yáng* 'sunshine', but as soon as we have a context, graphic or textual, the uncertainty is resolved. For example, if we write 昂 or if we write 至河昂 ('reached the sunnyside of the River'), in either case the grapheme is now unambiguously standing for the word/morpheme *yáng* 'sunshine'.

Notice that the situation in Chinese is actually more complicated than our simple 昂 example shows. The grapheme also appears in these frames: 土昂 *chǎng* 'arena', 湯昂 *tāng* 'soup', 禳昂 *shāng* 'exorcise', and in a number of other characters with pronunciations similar to or identical with these listed (including *yáng* listed earlier). This means that in an analysis of the writing system more complete than the one we have experimented with here, with its three morphemes pronounced *yáng*, we would have to recognize the grapheme 昂 as standing for a considerably larger set of morphemes, perhaps as many as a dozen, with pronunciations not just identical to *yáng*, but also similar in ways that can be approximately delineated but that are difficult

to pinpoint precisely.<sup>10</sup>

Even though we have to admit such a degree of ambiguity in both pronunciation and meaning, i.e., in morpheme, for the grapheme occurring in isolation, still we are able to say what the grapheme stands for, as a set of possible morphemes, without having to make recourse to the ill-defined and non-distinctive notion of the syllable. In sum, I would like to re-phrase DeFrancis's claim with respect to the "basic operational unit" of the script, and say that the grapheme stands either for a single morpheme that has no homophones or near-homophones, and hence entails no ambiguity, or for a set of two or more homophonous or nearly homophonous morphemes, and is as a consequence ambiguous as to specific morpheme intended. This is the nature, I think, of the basic operational unit of the Chinese writing system. The ambiguity which accompanies many of these units (graphemes) is eliminated by what we may call *secondary operational units*, i.e., semantic classifiers, attached to the basic grapheme to produce an unambiguous frame (=character).<sup>11</sup> This view not only gives a sounder theoretical basis to the analysis of the writing system than does the claim that graphemes represent non-morphemic syllables (which we have claimed do not exist), but it also happens to conform closely to the actual historical evolution of the script.

The third, and final, part of DeFrancis's book is titled "Writing in Comparative Perspective", and consists of two chapters, one called "A Critique of Writing about Writing", and another called "The Essential Oneness of Full Writing". It is in the second of these two that DeFrancis pulls his thoughts together into what might be regarded as a 'conclusion' about writing in general, if one may say that DeFrancis has drawn a single conclusion at all. The word 'oneness' of the title of this chapter recapitulates the subtitle of the book itself, and signals the main point: writing as a feature of human society, for all of its apparent diversity, has certain fundamental, defining characteristics that remain invariable. DeFrancis identifies and discusses three such characteristics, which I shall paraphrase here, giving his chapter sub-headings in parentheses: (a) in one way or another all writing is based on speech ("Writing as Visible Speech"), (b) writing systems universally employ graphic signs to convey meaning both phonetically and non-phonetically ("The Duality Principle"), and (c) writing systems tend to be conservative, and to reflect obsolescent or obsolete stages of the language in question ("The Dead Hand of the Past").

Of these three features that DeFrancis sees as universal characteristics of writing systems, the second is, I think, the one with the most theoretical interest. The first is no more than a definition, and important as that is, it is settled by fiat. DeFrancis deals with the related matters of "Kinds of Communication" and "What is Writing" in part I, chapters one and two respectively, of the book. While each of those sections is, in this reviewer's opinion, a bit wordy and somewhat discursive, they do together come finally to the correct conclusion, namely that writing must be defined as the graphic representation of speech.

One could, of course, define writing so as to include all kinds of things that do not stand directly and unambiguously for speech but that convey meaning nonetheless, e.g., road signs, label logos on boxes and bottles, charts, pictures, etc. But these definitions would inevitably be loose and not amenable to precise formulation. DeFrancis properly senses that to allow for such definitions of writing is to open the door to a myriad of complications in dealing with the formal structure and operation of writing systems, complications that are altogether unnecessary and that contribute nothing to the theory or practical understanding of how writing works. Except in the most arbitrary and unmotivated way, one cannot define writing precisely other than as speech-based; other formulations are impressionistic and suggestive, not definitive.

In his second claim for universality, that all writing systems are characterized by a "duality principle", i.e., that they all use both phonetic and non-phonetic signs to convey meaning, DeFrancis means that there are two different kinds of graphic elements operating in every script. Those signs that convey meaning phonetically he calls 'graphemes'; these are, as we have said, the basic operational units of the script. For English they are the letters, and for Chinese the "phonetics".<sup>12</sup> The presence of two kinds of signs operating in this way within a writing system is often referred to as "double articulation", and DeFrancis introduces this term and notion. But

when he comes to apply it to specific scripts he seems to see it two different ways, only one of which is appropriate.

Simply stated, the notion of double articulation as it applies to writing systems means that a script consists of two kinds of graphic signs, one kind that functions in a *determinative* way, i.e., that determines a value (sound or sense) in its own right by virtue of having a constant intrinsic value, and another that functions in a *distinguishing* or *discriminative* way, i.e., that has no intrinsic value but that serves only to discriminate or distinguish one value from another within the system on an ad hoc basis.

Consider the three English words *for*, *fore*, and *four*. They consist of three or four graphemes each. In all three words the graphemes <f>, <o> and <r> specify sound values, i.e., are sound-determinative. The graphemes <e> in *fore* and <u> in *four* have no sound value, and are thus non-phonetic. But they do serve to discriminate the words *fore* and *four* from *for*, and from each other, thus they are far from superfluous. They are in other words sense-discriminators. The intrinsic sound value that they have elsewhere in the writing system is irrelevant to their functioning in these three frames. We could equally well discriminate the three homonyms /for/ with, e.g., subscript numerals, viz., *for*<sub>1</sub>, *for*<sub>2</sub>, and *for*<sub>3</sub>, if we all agreed that the convention for English orthography in this case should be to let the subscript 1 stand for the preposition, 2 to be the locative, and 3 to be four. That we do not do this means nothing of theoretical import for our writing system, that we *could* do it means everything, namely it means that those graphemes <e> and <u> in the contexts <fore> and <four> are arbitrary sense-discriminators, and have no intrinsic values. This in turn demonstrates that the English writing system has both determinative and discriminative graphic signs, as it must if DeFrancis is right about this feature being universal in writing systems.

There are, of course, good phonetic historical reasons for the <e> or *fore* and the <u> or *four*, but in a synchronic analysis of English orthography historical explanations are not relevant. Consider the following: *flower* and *flour*. Here the graphemic distinction is entirely without historical foundation; the two words in origin are the same word. If we allow *w* to be an allograph of <u> (which we could, following Gelb, indicate by writing <<w>>),<sup>13</sup> we could say that the graphemes <f, l, o, u, r> are sound-determinative, and that the <e> of *flower* (= <flour>) is sense-discriminative, because it discriminates the meaning of 'flower' from that of 'flour'.<sup>14</sup>

Double articulation in the Chinese script is even easier to see than in English. It consists in the difference between the "phonetics" and the "radicals", that is, between the graphemes that DeFrancis called the 'basic operational units' and those that he called 'nonphonetic', and which we called the 'secondary operational units'. In 扌<sub>扌</sub>, 木<sub>木</sub>, and 𠃉<sub>𠃉</sub> the grapheme 扌<sub>扌</sub> is sound-determinative, allowing variation only within the range of possible morphemes sketched above. But the other elements, 扌, 木, and 𠃉 respectively, are not sound-determinative, rather they are sound-and-sense-distinguishing, that is, they are morpheme-discriminative; they serve to distinguish the intended morpheme from all other possibilities that might be represented by the grapheme 扌<sub>扌</sub>. That there is a historical and non-arbitrary reason for the presence of each of these secondary operating units in these three characters is irrelevant to their non-determinative, morpheme-discriminative function here.

When on page 254 he gives a description of what would constitute double articulation in English orthography DeFrancis says that the 'first articulation' would be the "strings of letters" that represent morphemes, intended to be taken as units, and that the 'second articulation' would be just "letters or groups of letters". For Chinese he says the 'first articulation' would be the character itself, except for those few that do not singly stand for any morpheme, and the 'second articulation' would be the grapheme.

These descriptions for both English and Chinese differ from the way the concept of double articulation is generally thought to apply to writing systems (as I have sketched it above), and from the implication of DeFrancis's own subsequent discussion of it. On pages 258-260 he describes the relation between graphemes and "nonphonetics", i.e., semantic classifiers or semantic determinatives ("radicals"), in a way that looks much more like the accepted pattern of double

articulation than do the descriptions given on page 254. In any case DeFrancis concludes this section by saying that all of the techniques that he has discussed "comprise an aspect of the writing universal (sic)" that he calls "the duality principle, whereby writing systems convey meaning by nonphonetic as well as phonetic means." (p. 261)

What DeFrancis has not pursued sufficiently, in my opinion, is the implication of what it means to convey meaning non-phonetically in a writing system. It can only mean to discriminate, rather than to determine, and thus such discrimination can only operate on signs that already have a sound-determinative value. But because the grapheme subject to being distinguished may have more than one sound value, the non-phonetic secondary operational unit may still function to discriminate sound, not just sense. Such graphic devices are therefore the *sound-and-sense-discriminators* that complement the graphemic *sound-and-sense-determiners*. The important point, I think, is to recognize that a *non-phonetic* element can still discriminate *sound* value. In the frame  $\begin{smallmatrix} \text{旦} \\ \text{湯} \end{smallmatrix} \text{ tāng}$ , for example, the non-phonetic element  $\begin{smallmatrix} \text{旦} \\ \text{旦} \end{smallmatrix}$  discriminates the sound value *tāng*, distinguishing it from all other possible sound values that the grapheme could have (*yáng*, *shāng*, *chǎng*, etc.). That  $\begin{smallmatrix} \text{旦} \\ \text{旦} \end{smallmatrix}$  is really sound-discriminating, and not sound-determinative, is clear from the fact that this element  $\begin{smallmatrix} \text{旦} \\ \text{旦} \end{smallmatrix}$  does not systematically determine a voiceless aspirated alveolar stop, i.e., the initial *t-* of *tang*, throughout the writing system as a whole.

If DeFrancis had noticed the seemingly paradoxical fact that non-phonetic elements can serve as sound-discriminators, he might perhaps have given them a little more status than he has, and have identified a more fundamental role for them in the overall operation of the Chinese writing system than they are accorded in the present sketch. To do that would in turn offer an opportunity, I think, to refine the concept of grapheme (as DeFrancis has defined it) so as to allow for the fact that many homophonous syllables are not written with the same grapheme, and that many characters (frames) have no readily identifiable core grapheme ("phonetic") at all. Both of these facts about the everyday Chinese writing system argue against the notion of a morphosyllabic script in contradistinction to a morphemic or logographic one, as an appropriate typological designation, and neither of them has yet been satisfactorily accounted for in DeFrancis's work.

#### Notes

1. See in this connection the review article of Gelb's book by Herbert H. Paper in *Lingua*, 4.1 (1954), 89-96.

2. In his 1984 book, *The Chinese Language, Fact and Fantasy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press), DeFrancis explicitly "swears off" the use of the term 'ideograph' with the zeal of a "repentant sinner" (his own term for himself in this context). See pp. 144-148 for his curious four-page essay titled "Objections to the term 'ideograph'."

3. H. A. Gleason, *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* (New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961, rev. ed.), p. 409. Note that the fit between graphemes and phonemes is only one possibility for an alphabetic system like English; it is also possible to fit the graphemes to the morphophonemes. In the case of English this is often thought to be a more useful and revealing approach. DeFrancis recognizes this in his discussion of alphabetic systems, and of English in particular. (Pp. 200-208)

4. See Y.R. Chao, *Language and Symbolic Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 102. The term *morphosyllabic* was first used in connection with the Chinese script, as far as I know, by M. A. French, "Observations on the Chinese Script", in *Writing without Letters*, ed. by William Haas (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1976), pp. 101-127, esp. p. 126. French did not elaborate on the meaning or applicability of the term in the way that DeFrancis has.

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

6. To enter into the great debate over whether Chinese is in any of its manifestations, Classical or other, truly monosyllabic would take us too far afield here, and it is moreover a question that I think, quite frankly, does not have a single simple unqualified answer 'yes' or 'no'. But we cannot avoid facing it in some sense if we are going to judge the typological analysis of the writing system on the basis of a claim about the degree to which the language that that writing system reflects is monosyllabic, especially if we are going to disagree with DeFrancis's view in this regard.

DeFrancis raises examples like the words *shanhu* 珊瑚 'coral' and *tihu* 鶻 胡鳥 'pelican' to illustrate that modern Chinese (and Classical as well) has bisyllabic words (p. 259). In both of these cases, as is well known, neither syllable of each has any identifiable independent meaning that would justify calling it a morpheme from the perspective of an objective linguistic analysis. But when it is the writing system that we are concerned with the story is a little different. DeFrancis himself has put his finger on the crucial difference when he observes that the two syllables *hu* are written with two *different* characters, and are by virtue of that very fact understood subjectively by the everyday user of the language and script as being two distinct "words", i.e., morphemes (except for the fact that the everyday person does not of course know the technical term 'morpheme'). This makes them, I would submit, insofar as it pertains to the writing system, morphemes, and not meaningless syllables; so *mutatis mutandis* for the syllables *shan* and *ti*. And thus from this perspective, subjective and geared to the perception of the unsophisticated user as it is, the writing system reflects a fundamentally monosyllabic language, and can be typologically analyzed accordingly.

7. It is probably not necessary here to rehearse the discussion over the difference between a morpheme and a word in Chinese, nor to point out as has been well done elsewhere, e.g., French (1976), pp. 103-107 (see endnote 4), that how we define the script, and its relation to the language depends very much on what language we refer to by the label 'Chinese'. For our present discussion we are content to adopt Y. R. Chao's approach, limiting ourselves to talking about Classical Chinese and its writing system.

8. Because they are secondary in both the functional sense and the historical sense, they are precisely not "radical", i.e., not in any sense "roots" of the character, and they should not be called 'radicals'.

9. If we automatically read the grapheme *s* as the "letter *s*", i.e., pronounced [ɛs], phonemically /s/, not [ziy], phonemically /z/, it is because we are arbitrarily imposing a defined context on the isolated grapheme, namely that of 'name of the letter', which of course is a perfectly good English word, viz., *ess*, but always written logographically as *s*. But suppose we had a fragmentary English manuscript in which the partial word *do. .s* occurred. Here we cannot know whether the <*s*> stands for /s/ or /z/ until we know what the missing letter is. If it is *t*, for example, then the <*s*> stands for /s/, if it is instead *g*, then the grapheme <*s*> stands for /z/.

10. We can see from these and comparable data that the general rule is that frames using the same grapheme tend to rime (irrespective of tone), and to have homorganic initials. But even this simple phrasing of the expected phonetic congruence of characters with the same "phonetic" falls short in many cases when we look only at the modern Chinese pronunciation. There is a much better adherence to this general rule when we look at the Middle (T'ang period) or Old (Han or slightly earlier) Chinese values. Even so, one of the most intractable of problems in the area of the reconstruction of Old Chinese, and in the understanding of the fit between the ancient language and the writing system has precisely to do with this matter of how different two morphemes can be phonetically and still share the same phonetic in their graphic structure.

11. In his discussion of frames and graphemes, and of the elements that make up Chinese characters in general (pp. 53-56), DeFrancis does not allow the term *grapheme* to apply to semantic classifiers, nor does he define them in any other way except to call them 'nonphonetic' elements. This leaves the reader wondering just where these elements fit within the structure and functioning of the writing system. To define one of the most readily apparent of the graphic units of the script solely by the absence of a certain feature ('nonphonetic') is only minimally satisfactory.

12. The term 'phonetic' is conventional for that grapheme in a Chinese character that "carries", or "hints at" the sound. In a formal description of the Chinese script it ought to be called a *phonophoric*, as a more precise way to suggest the function of the grapheme within the system than the term 'phonetic'.

13. I.J. Gelb, "A Note on Morphographemics", *Melanges Marcel Cohen*, ed. By David Cohen (The Hague: Mouton, 1970).

14. English is replete with examples of this kind; it is easy to think of dozens of homophones that are orthographically distinguished one from the other in this way. This has led Elmar Holenstein to remark that "the range of examples in English (*knight-night; know-no; pane-pain; lane-lain; to-too-two*) is so abundant that one wonders if perhaps English has made the turn back towards the logographic principle." Elmar Holenstein, "Double Articulation in Writing", in *Writing in Focus*, ed. by Florian Coulmas and Konrad Ehlich (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton), 1983, p. 51.

Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao, eds. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989. 285 pages; glossary, index.

Over the centuries alcohol has not only inspired poets but also at times prompted them to address their verses to the inspiring liquid itself.

Tea, by comparison, has usually been much duller stuff.

But what may be inherently quite staid, even the quintessence of ordinariness, can -- through the magic of culture -- be transformed. And that, in a word, is what the Japanese did with tea: taking some cues from the Chinese, they not only learned to whip its powdered form up into a jade-colored broth, but also invested it with a variety of ceremonies, codes, objets d'art, lore, philosophical essays, calligraphy on hanging scrolls, and long lineages of professional tea families who are the special custodians of all the above. Tea-drinking became *cha-no-yu* 茶の湯; ironically, when embellished and enriched, it was blessed with the plainest of names, "boiled tea water". The paradoxes at the heart of tea all seem to be there for a reason.

Realizing that what they had done with tea was a bit extraordinary, the Japanese have developed a habit of meeting and greeting the rest of the world with their tea. Chanoyu is choreographed hospitality. It charms and disarms. *Tea in Japan* includes an essay by Michael Cooper that reminds us that there is nothing new about this. In fact, the sixteenth-century missionaries from Europe were amazed at tea's role in Japan.

Cooper's is one of seven superb essays and three interesting "commentaries" by scholars from Japan and the West that comprise this book. Among them are no sleepers -- rare in any set of collected essays. To single out a few here for mention is not to suggest the others are less than excellent.

Kumakura Isao says something new and interesting about one of the most famous and perplexing deaths in Japanese history, that of Sen no Rikyū (1522-1591). Rikyū committed suicide by disembowelment after his residence in Kyoto had been surrounded by 3,000 soldiers

dispatched by the strongman Hideyoshi. People have long wondered why the master of such a gentle art as the tea ceremony was so treated. Kumakura adopts a perspective that has gained gradual acceptance, namely that Rikyū had in fact been heavily involved in politics -- at least as an adviser -- and had made some wrong moves. Kumakura goes beyond that, however, to hypothesize that Rikyū subsequently became the "god" of tea in a way through which other Japanese gods were made: "I am convinced," he writes, "that it is the shocking manner of Rikyū's death that explains why his *chanoyu* has been so rigorously preserved and transmitted, almost as an object of faith." (p. 49) Kumakura brings up the precedent that Rikyū himself seems to have drawn upon in dying -- that of Sugawara Michizane (845-903), Japan's preeminent scholar of Chinese learning in the classical period.<sup>1</sup> Michizane, vilified in court machinations, was exiled, died in that wretched state, and then became literally the "god of learning" of the Japanese. His postmortem "comeback" was in the form of retribution (*tatari* 祟り) from the grave; his enemies were so hit by death and disaster that the government, taking the dead Michizane as source, placated his anger by apotheosizing him. Kumakura sees the same pattern in the sixteenth-century tea master's death and transfiguration. The only problem I see with this is that there is no record of *tatari* in Rikyū's case or that his enemies were thereby intimidated into honoring him. Perhaps he "psyched" them in advance by his oblique reference to Michizane and gave them reason to fear that, once dead, he might pull a series of *tatari* like the early Sinologist. If so, Rikyū demonstrated how to use his own knowledge of the past to "create" a precedent and a spiritual ancestor -- and rather brilliantly. His creativity was not limited to the tearoom, although he was a nonpareil there.

William H. McNeill, one of our century's most distinguished historians, presents a fascinating thesis in this book, one concerning a result of tea never contemplated by even its most enthusiastic devotees. Taken more literally than anyone before had noticed, McNeill sees *chanoyu*, boiled tea water, as having its power by virtue of its being boiled. In East Asia that checked infection. "Vast cities that arose in Sung China by A.D. 1000 and in Japan some four or five centuries later could not have long survived without some sort of barrier against propagation of lethal epidemics through drinking water. Tea provided such a barrier...." I cannot judge the applicability of this hypothesis with respect to China but I suspect it is accurate for Japan -- at least as a factor that may have contributed to lowered mortality and population growth in the late medieval / early modern period. No wonder its advocates said tea was good for health; it also kept death at bay. If there were ways of documenting this more exactly, it would be interesting to correlate McNeill's point with studies undertaken by Ann Bowman Jannetta.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, a word needs to be said, mostly in appreciation, of Haga Kōshirō's "The Wabi Aesthetic Through the Ages," here skillfully translated by Martin Collcutt. Haga, like Hisamatsu Shin'ichi and some others, has long maintained that, although *chanoyu* is a pluriform cultural phenomenon, it does have an intellectual center and that center is Zen. The pinning down of the Zen aesthetic has been notoriously elusive -- and is perhaps so by definition. In all his works in Japanese Haga has brought his thorough knowledge of a variety of Chinese classics into what he writes. Unless I am wrong, this is the first of his things to appear in English and I am grateful to see it.

*Chanoyu* is a strangely-shaped thing to introduce into the academic curriculum. Trying to do so a few years ago we wondered into which department it would best fit: History? Art? Oriental Languages? Religion? Maybe Dance? The posing of this problem was itself an index to the richness of the curricular entrant. Since courses in it have been fitted -- in one way or another -- into what is done at various institutions, it will be important to have this book available in paper for use as a text. Precisely because it is not just about tea, this book is, by far, the best book about tea in any Western language.

1. See Robert Borgen, *Sugawara no Michizane and the Early Heian Court* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), especially pp. 307-336.

2. Ann Bowman Jannetta, *Epidemics and Mortality in Early Modern Japan* (Princeton: Princeton

University Press, 1987).

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Vladimir N. Basilov, ed. *Nomads of Eurasia*. Translated by Mary Fleming Zirin. Photography by Dana Levy and Joel Sackett. Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, 1989. xvi + 192 pages; index, bibliography.

This book was published in conjunction with the exhibition "Nomads: Masters of the Eurasian Steppe," organized jointly by the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. It consists of three sections: 1. an introductory essay on nomads and their life style by V.N. Basilov, 2. a series of essays by various authors on the material culture of nomadic peoples in the historical period 8th century B.C.-14th century A.D. (The Scythians and Sakians; the Huns; the Turkic Peoples; and the Mongol-Tatar States), and 3. a series of essays by various authors on different aspects of nomadic life and material culture in the 19th and 20th centuries (Yurts, Rugs, and Felts; Clothing and Personal Adornment; Household Furnishings and Utensils; Harness and Weaponry; Bowed Musical Instruments; and Religious Beliefs). The latter essays are concerned with groups only in the U.S.S.R. and Mongolia, not, say, also in China and Afghanistan. Two merits of these essays are 1. the inclusion of the Siberian nomadic forest dwellers such as the Buryats, Tuvinians, and Yakuts, who are linked historically and culturally with the more traditionally nomadic groups of the Steppe, and 2. the choice of subjects for these essays, especially the chapter by V.N. Basilov on bowed musical instruments.

The major premises of this book are 1. the unity of nomadic culture in spite of linguistic and ethnic differences over time, and especially 2. the value and importance of the ethnography of modern nomads such as the Qazakhs and Qirghiz for an understanding of the historical cultures and their problems. So, for instance, V.N. Basilov's discussion of the Qazakh *baqsı* (shaman-poet-musician) has important implications for an understanding of Indo-Iranian religion and the roles of the *rši* and *hotr / zaotar* in it. This proposition has already been advanced by H.S. Nyberg (*Die Religionen des alten Iran* [Osnabrück: Otto Zeller, 1966], pp. 166ff.) as part of his exposition of the religious environment of the Avestan Gāthās, the 17 verse sermons of the *zaotar* Zarathuštra. Unfortunately, religious textual scholarship, ever leery of the study of "folk" religion, has not been receptive to this proposition, its most notorious respondent having been W.B. Henning (*Zoroaster--Politician or Witch-doctor?* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951]).

This concern for the unity of nomadic culture in all historical periods has long been a characteristic feature of Russian/Soviet historical scholarship about Central Asia, even if the point has often been lost on "Classical" and "Orientalist" scholars in Western Europe and North America writing about, say, "Ancient History".

On the whole this is a very interesting book which provides a particularly clear and concrete sense of Eurasian nomadic life, invaluable especially for an understanding of the history of Central Asia which is deeper than one might obtain from the mere reading of Persian or Turkic historiographical texts or the principle orientalist scholars of the subject such as V.V. Bartol'd and B. Spuler. In particular, the photographs of Eurasiatic nomads in the late 19th and early 20th century which have been reproduced from the collection of Peter the Great's Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, Leningrad, are especially interesting.

The major drawback of this book is that relevant non-Soviet sources have been consulted sparingly, with the result that the writing is not always at the level of scholarly sophistication that one might hope. In particular, V.N. Basilov's otherwise excellent introductory essay does not reflect modern non-Soviet thinking on the subject of nomadism. See, for instance, the chapter "Einleitung" in the volume *Zentralasien* of the series *Fischer Weltgeschichte* (Gavin Hambly, ed.,

*Zentralasien*, Fischer Weltgeschichte, 16 [Frankfurt: Fischer Bücherei, 1966], pp. 11-27, 321-22, especially note 13, p. 322). This problem is also reflected in the two-part bibliography included at the end of the volume. This, in turn, may account for the weaknesses in the historical discussions in the chapters on the Turkic peoples, and, especially, the Mongol-Tatar states, and in the discussion of Lamaism in the chapter on religious beliefs. Readers familiar with scholarship such as that of O. Pritsak ("Von den Karluk zu den Karachaniden," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 101 [1951]: 270-300), B. Spuler (*Die Goldene Horde: Die Mongolen in Russland 1223-1502*, 2d. ed. [Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1965]), or W. Eberhard (*China und seine westlichen Nachbarn: Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen und neueren Geschichte Zentralasiens* [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978]) concerning the history of this region, or those familiar with the excellent discussion of Lamaism in R.A. Stein's *Tibetan Civilization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972) (pp. 165-91) will find that the treatment of these subjects in the volume under review is weak or even lacking.

Finally, the editorial work upon the English text (a translation from Russian) leaves something to be desired in places, resulting in a volume which, albeit very interesting, is at times difficult to read.

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## Reviews by the Editor

## Philosophy and Language

A review article of:

François Jullien. *Procès ou Création: Une introduction a la pensée des lettrés chinois*. Paris: Seuil, 1989. 313 pages. 170 francs.

Judging from its title, one would not be able to guess that this is a book about the seventeenth-century neo-Confucianist, Wang Fu-chih 王夫之 (1619-1692). Surprisingly, the exclusion of Wang's name is deliberate. The reason for this unusual procedure is that the author, François Jullien, is less interested in describing the life, times, and thought of a single representative of the Confucian tradition than in using him to ask larger questions about Chinese thought and its place in the world. His choice of Wang Fu-chih is quite apt, for this ardent Ming loyalist was the consummate Confucian.<sup>1</sup>

Wang criticized both Chu Hsi 朱熹 (1130-1200) and Ch'eng I 程頤 (1033-1107) because they contrasted *li* 理 ("principle") and *ch'i* 氣 ("material energy"). Strongly influenced by Chang Tsai's 張載 (1020-1077) conceptualization of material energy, Wang felt that principle was inherent in or identical with it. A staunch realist, he was resolutely opposed to any idealist tendencies. Consequently, he also disparaged Lu Hsiang-shan 陸象山 (1139-1192) for overemphasis on *hsin* 心 ("mind") and *hsing* 性 ("nature"). His chief intellectual nemesis, however, was Wang Yang-ming 王陽明 (1472-1529) who espoused the "extension of innate knowledge" (*chih liang-chih* 致良知).

As a purist who sought inspiration from Han period Confucians, Wang naturally scoffed at Taoism for its insistence on *wu* 無 ("non-being") and Buddhism for its advocacy of *hsü* 虛 ("vacuity"). Like most neo-Confucians, Wang was willfully oblivious of the substantial contributions of Buddhism and Taoism to his own tradition. For example, two of his favorite terms, "principle" and "spirit" (*shen* 神), had been inalterably affected by Buddhism and Taoism respectively.<sup>2</sup> Wang also pretended not to be influenced in the slightest by Western philosophy,<sup>3</sup> but he was certainly aware of the contents of the works published by Christian missionaries.<sup>3</sup> Whether disingenuous or not, Wang Fu-chih strove to present himself as thoroughly Confucian and without any trace of contamination by inferior doctrines.

The political climate in which he lived may have contributed to his intransigence. So unwilling was he to cooperate with the hated Manchu conquerors that, at the age of 33, he retired to the mountains and wrote voluminously and splenetically for the next forty years (many of Wang's works remained unpublished long after his death). Wang Fu-chih expressed extremely nationalistic, if not overtly racist, sentiments in his *Huang shu* [Yellow Book] 黃書.<sup>4</sup> It was this polemical quality to much of his writing that led to his rescue from obscurity during the latter part of the Ch'ing dynasty. His call was taken up by men like Tseng Kuo-fan 曾國藩 (1811-1917), Wang K'ai-yün 王闓運 (1832-1915), Wang Hsien-ch'ien 王先謙 (1842-1917), and T'an Ssu-t'ung 譚嗣同 (1865-1898). Wang's ideas also were inspirational to their predecessor Tai Chen 戴震 (1723-1777).

A society dedicated to the study of Wang Fu-chih's works was founded in Changsha, Hunan in 1915; among its members was the young Mao Tse-tung. During the vigorous ideological debates of the late fifties, Wang's materialism served as a benchmark. His celebrated dogma, "the world consists solely of things (*ch'i* 氣)," was a powerful weapon in the struggle against idealism. As interpreted sympathetically by communist theoreticians, Wang posited a universe that existed through an unceasing process of production and reproduction. Things are thus renewed every day and this allows for evolutionary progress.

Jullien does not waste his time on such mundane matters as Wang's career and what other people thought of him. He is, in fact, not at all concerned with Wang Fu-chih the individual. Rather, the author tries to comprehend the Confucian vision of the world through one of its most articulate proponents. His aim is to get inside of the Confucian mind by focussing intensively on a few selected texts<sup>5</sup> of a quintessential exemplar of the late tradition.

Given these predispositions, it is to be expected that Jullien's book does not have the look of a typical Sinological study. Although he is fully aware of the importance of biography in Chinese literati culture, Jullien does not even provide an outline of the main events in Wang Fu-chih's life. Ironically, Jullien does offer (pp. 291-295) a dozen or so thumbnail sketches of Chinese thinkers who came before Wang Fu-chih and to whom he reacted in one way or another. Similarly, Jullien eschews close, annotated translation, a favorite device of Sinologists for grappling with difficult Chinese texts. Except for a couple of paragraph-long passages in chapter 11, there are very few direct translations. Even the terms, phrases, and occasional sentences that Jullien does render into French are very free and highly dependent upon the context of his own argument. For instance, *ming-yu* 明幽 is in one place (p. 27) translated as "visible and invisible," elsewhere (pp. 61, 62, 78) as "manifest and latent." *Kan-t'ung* 感同 is translated both as "incitement-diffusion" (p. 39) and "influence through incitement" (p. 45). There are no explanatory notes in the entire book, although adequate references are given for primary sources. Secondary sources are seldom mentioned. The bibliography, too, is scanty by normal Sinological standards: aside from ten titles by Wang Fu-chih himself, there are only five books in Chinese, three articles in Japanese, and two in English. Nor does Jullien's writing bristle with transcriptions and the other usual appurtenances of Sinology. All tetragraphs (*fang-k'uai-tzu* 方塊字) are safely tucked away in a list at the back of the book (pp. 299-313).

By no means are these remarks meant to stand as a criticism of Jullien. My intention is only to describe his book accurately and fairly. As a matter of fact, I found reading *Procès ou Création* to be a tremendously stimulating and refreshing experience. My only genuine complaint is that Jullien's book lacks an index (a problem that is endemic to many French publications). I also did not relish the smell of the putrid paper (or perhaps it was some invidious ink) that nearly made me ill as I turned its pages (fortunately I did not have to cut them open one by one with a knife).

The book is divided into four sections, the first two being more theoretical in nature, the third "anthropological," and the fourth illustrative. Section I (chapters 1-5) recounts a systematic conception of the world as a continual and regular process with neither eschatology nor teleology. Jullien focusses especially on the bipolar structure of reality and the elimination of all external causality. He asserts that ancient Chinese thinkers were accordingly highly attuned to the rhythmic alternations of nature.

Section II (chapters 6-10) argues that, in place of religiosity, traditional Chinese thought stressed the human capacity for transformation and transcendence. This allows for continuity and coherence with the absolute and unconditional (Heaven, i.e. T'ien) without resort to illusionary metaphysics.

Section III (chapters 11-15) examines the application of the above conceptions in such realms as anthropology (i.e. sociology), ethics, and language. Jullien pays especial attention to the *Book of Changes* and Wang Fu-chih's commentary on it, reiterating that Chinese thought is notably well equipped to deal with the endless flux of the universe.

Section IV (chapters 16-17) reveals the specific implications of Confucian ideology for Chinese historiography and poetry. As for the former, Jullien maintains that there is operative a principle of intelligibility that unites consistency on the one hand and spontaneity on the other. This mode of thinking is pursued to Japan where, in Jullien's estimation, the Confucian vision is enriched by men like Itō Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627-1705) and Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728) during the early Tokugawa. As for poetry, I found a personal sense of gratification in Jullien's sixteenth chapter where he describes literary composition in traditional China as a process, not as an act of creation. He speaks of the "advent" rather than the "making" or "writing" of a poem. Here and elsewhere, Jullien vindicates the positions set forth by me several years ago in a

controversial paper on creativity in Chinese literature.<sup>6</sup>

Jullien ends his book with a short chapter on the value of comparisons in which he attempts to justify his treatment of Chinese thought vis-à-vis Western philosophy. Acutely conscious of the Scylla and Charybdis of exoticism and ethnocentrism, Jullien adopts what he believes is a heuristic approach. The comparative dimension of his outlook is prominent in most of the chapters, so it is understandable that he would style his opus an *essai de problématique interculturelle*.

Of all the chapters in Jullien's book, I was attracted most by the eleventh, entitled "The Linguistic Expression of Process." This may be simply because I am currently deeply interested in the complex relationships among language, thought, and society in China. Nonetheless, it seems to me not only that this chapter is key to everything that Jullien has to say, but that its implications for a wide variety of readers are also greater than those of the other chapters. It is rather inconsequential that Wang Fu-chih is the ostensible object of Jullien's investigation in this chapter, for the same sort of remarks could have been made about most other Chinese thinkers -- the examples he gives just happen to be drawn from the works of Wang Fu-chih.

The real question addressed in this chapter is that posed by the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis concerning linguistic determinism, namely, does language shape thought? This raises a whole series of related issues which, though highly sensitive, are a legitimate subject for inquiry. Indeed, over the past few years, the role of language in Chinese thought has been debated with increasing frequency and sophistication. Richard Robinson<sup>7</sup> has studied with extraordinary care and accuracy what happens to Sanskrit texts when they are restated in Classical Chinese. The differences are both substantial and revelatory. Hajime Nakamura<sup>8</sup> contrasted Classical Chinese diction and grammar with those of Sanskrit, Japanese, and Tibetan. Because of the nature of the tetragraphs and a lack of inflection, he holds that Classical Chinese is more concrete and particular (i.e. less metaphysical) than the other three languages. Alfred Bloom<sup>9</sup> caused a furor when he presented evidence which seemed to suggest that it is difficult to make counterfactual or hypothetical statements in Sinitic (Han) languages. Chad Hansen<sup>10</sup> also drew fire for proposing that all Sinitic nouns function as mass nouns and that this had a decided effect on the quality of early Chinese philosophy. David Pollack<sup>11</sup> followed by discerning a "technical" quality to Chinese writing where meaning is located in formal structures in contrast to Japanese expression which emphasizes "spirit" above all.

Without so much as a nod to any of these scholars, Jullien now comes on stage and offers his own thoughtful and illuminating analysis of this awkward topic which refuses to die. There are certain formal, linguistic facts that he gets wrong. For example, the basic units of the Chinese script should not be called ideograms because only an exceedingly small proportion of them convey ideas directly. As John DeFrancis has demonstrated,<sup>12</sup> the Chinese script is fundamentally morphosyllabic, i.e. its basic units are made up of elements that convey both sound and meaning, but neither with a high degree of precision. In addition, I am disappointed by Jullien's failure to make any meaningful distinction between language and script. This is particularly significant for Sinitic where the gulf between the two is so large. In spite of these inadequacies, this is an extremely perceptive chapter which discusses the problem of language and thought usefully and sympathetically. In my estimation, Jullien's assessment of the structural properties of Classical Chinese and their implications for conceptualization is right on target. This is a position that I myself have supported, albeit from a more linguistically and literarily oriented viewpoint, for well over a decade. This chapter also serves well to recapitulate many of the ideas expressed elsewhere in Jullien's book and the method whereby he presents them.<sup>13</sup>

#### Notes

1. For a general survey of Wang's world view and twentieth-century assessments of it, see V. G. Burov, *Mirovozzrenie Kitaiskogo M'islitelya XVII Veka Van Chuan'-shanya* (Moscow: "Nauka,"

Glavnaya Redaktsiya Vostochnoi Literatur'i, 1976).

2. For a study of the evolution of neo-Confucian technical terminology, see Partick Edwin Moran, "Explorations of Chinese Metaphysical Concepts: The History of Some Key Terms from the Beginnings to Chu Hsi (1130-1200)" (University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. dissertation, 1983).
3. Jacques Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures*, tr. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Paris: Editions de la Maison de Sciences de l'Homme, 1985; originally published in French as *Chine et christianisme* by Editions Gallimard, 1982), p. 127.
4. Ernstjoachim Vierheller, *Nation und Elite im Denken von Wang Fu-chih (1619-1692)*, Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, XLIX (Hamburg and Tokyo: [Deutsche] Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, 1968), pp. 24-39. Also see Chang Hsi-t'ang 張西堂, *Wang Ch'uan-shan hsüeh-p'u [Chronology of the Scholarly Achievements of Wang Fu-chih]* 王船山學譜 (Hong Kong: Ch'ung-wen shu-tien, 1971; originally published 1938), pp. 117-121.
5. The major work cited and analyzed is *Chang Tzu Cheng-meng chu [Commentary on Master Chang's Clarification of Confusion]* 張子正蒙注 (Peking: Chung-hua shu-chü, 1975). Also receiving extensive attention is *Chou-i nei chuan [Inner Account of the Book of Changes]* 周易內傳 and *Chou-i wai chuan [Outer Account of the Book of Changes]* 周易外傳 (Taiwan: Kuang-wen shu-chü, 1971).
6. "The Narrative Revolution in Chinese Literature: Ontological Presuppositions," *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*, 5.1 (July, 1983), 1-27, see especially pp. 2-6. Views similar to those of Jullien were set forth earlier by Chung-yüan Chang in his "Creativity as Process in Taoism," *Eranos Jahrbuch*, 25 (1956), 391-415. For a monograph on Wang Fu-chih's poetics, see Siu-kit Wong, *Notes on Poetry from the Ginger Studio* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1989).
7. *Early Mādhyamika in India and China* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967).
8. *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples: India, China, Tibet, Japan*, revised English translation edited by Philip P. Wiener (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1974).
9. *The Linguistic Shaping of Thought: A Study in the Impact of Language on Thinking in China and the West* (Hillsdale, New Jersey: L. Erlbaum, 1981).
10. *Language and Logic in Ancient China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983).
11. *The Fracture of Meaning: Japan's Synthesis of China from the Eighth through the Eighteenth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).
12. *The Chinese Language: Fact and Fantasy* (Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1984). See also the same author's *Visible Speech: The Diverse Oneness of Writing Systems* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989) which looks at Chinese tetragraphs in a global context.
13. My complete translation of this chapter will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Philosophy East and West*.

## Language and Linguistics

W. South Coblin. *A Handbook of Eastern Han Sound Glosses*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1983. xiii + 316 pages.

This is an extremely technical book, one that is very forbidding to nonspecialists of Chinese historical phonology. That is unfortunate because it includes a great deal of information that would be useful to the general Sinologist if it were presented in a more accessible form. The purpose of this review is to cut through all of the linguistic jargon to explain what the book really has to offer.

Immediately after the brief preface comes a list of "Abbreviations and Signs." Anyone who wishes to consult Coblin's *Handbook* extensively should either memorize the list (an onerous task) or put a tab on the page to mark it for ease of reference. Otherwise, the book will be impenetrable because these and other symbols pepper the text at every turn.

Chapter One is an introduction to the study of Eastern Han phonology. Here Coblin surveys previous scholarship on poetic rhymes, loangraph glosses, analogical (*duruo*) glosses, direct sound glosses, paranomastic (this should be spelled "paronomastic" in modern English -- the word means "punning") glosses, and *fanqie* ("cut and splice") spelling. Of particular interest to me is the extensive use of Buddhist and other transcriptions in the reconstruction of Middle, Han period, and Old Chinese. Here I am in complete sympathy with Edwin G. Pulleyblank who has been criticized severely for relying on such transcriptions too heavily. In my estimation, the sound system of the various stages in the development of Sinitic languages will never be accurately established by strictly internal methods. Because the Chinese script is not a precise instrument for recording phonological data, we must rely on benchmarks from alphabetic scripts and syllabaries that have interacted with Sinitic. Coblin also mentions work that has been done on Han dialectology, but we are still just beginning to grope our way through the linguistic map of twentieth-century China, so our understanding of the real situation during the Eastern Han period is extremely hazy. Again, the Chinese characters have played havoc with language. Even though Yang Hsiung (53 B.I.E. - 18 I.E.) gamely tried to record dialectal / topolectal materials and modern scholars such as P. L.-M. Serruys have endeavored to extract useful data from his records, the partially phonetic partially morphemic nature of the script vitiates their efforts at every turn.

Chapter Two describes in more detail how each of the old glosses function. One comes away from reading this chapter with a feeling of sadness and intense frustration that there were no adequate means to indicate the sound of a word in premodern China. At best, the available methods required that one know for certain the sound of some other graph or graphs to gloss the pronunciation of a questionable graph. At worst, one had to rely on presumed etymological and cosmological connections, often of the most vague and ludicrous kind.

Chapter Three is a deeper discussion of the Eastern Han "dialects." The assumption here, as with virtually all writing on the subject, is that there was a single Han language throughout the whole of China. I have grave doubts that such was indeed the case. Even today, there are **at least eight major Sinitic languages**, so how could there have only been one two thousand years ago, especially when Sinitic speakers had made their way south of the Yangtze and west of Chang'an only in impermanent military expeditions and small outposts? I believe that, in the not too distant future, archeological findings and more sophisticated computational linguistics will enable us to affirm that Wu (\**ngwa*[g]), Yue (\**ʔviet*), and Chu (\**[tsh]ryag*[?]) were not even Sinitic languages at all.

The fourth chapter gives succinct descriptions of the sources for Coblin's data: Du Zichun (fl. late first century B.I.E.-early first century I.E.), Zheng Xing (fl. 15-35 I.E.), Zheng Zhong (d. 83 I.E.), *Bohu Tongyi* [*Comprehensive Discussions from White Tiger Hall*] (compiled by Ban Gu sometime after 79 I.E. but before 92), Xu Shen (fl. 100-120 I.E.), Zheng Xuan (127-200), Fu Qian (fl. 184), Ying Shao (fl. 195-197), Gao You (fl. 196-219), *Shiming* [*Explanations of Terms*] by Liu Xi (fl. 200), and Buddhist transcriptional evidence which appropriately receives seven times

the amount of coverage afforded any of the other sources. This is commensurate with its vital significance for the reconstruction of Eastern Han Sinitic languages.

Part II of the book begins with Coblin's systematic reconstruction of Eastern Han initials in Chapter Five and finals in Chapter Six. For historical phonologists, this must be the heart of the book, but I must confess that it is far beyond my capacity to follow.

Chapter Seven is a thoughtful conclusion that remarks upon the significance of Eastern Han Sinitic as a transitional stage between Old Sinitic and Middle Sinitic, which are the usual foci of investigations. Coblin shows how problems in Eastern Han dialectology can be of use in careful studies of both Old Sinitic and Middle Sinitic. But much work remains to be done, and Coblin points out several avenues for possible future research.

For me, the heart of this book is Part III which includes the data themselves. It is here that we can find Coblin's actual Eastern Han reconstructions. When I first began to use this handbook, I was sorely disappointed by the awkward arrangement of the material into eleven different sections according to the various sources. Even with the total stroke index (pp. 261-310) to all the characters in the data, it is still difficult to find a given entry quickly. Nonetheless, I am grateful for this bridge between standard Zhou period Sinitic for which we now have a number of tentative reconstructions (Bernhard Karlgren, Tung T'ung-ho, Chou Fa-kao, Fang-kuei Li, and Axel Schuessler) and standard Middle Sinitic where the many available reconstructions are slowly approaching a consensus. My one wish, though, is that someday a qualified historical phonologist will compile an alphabetically ordered (by Modern Standard Mandarin pronunciations) list of the five thousand most common Chinese characters giving the most reliable reconstructions for all of the major stages in the evolution of Standard Sinitic and for the eight major modern topolects. I believe this would be a great boon for all Sinologists because it would allow them to grasp both the spatial and temporal range of Sinitic at a glance. In scholarship, he who makes things as easy and lucid as possible while preserving the highest degree of accuracy is a veritable god.

Weldon South Coblin. *A Sinologist's Handlist of Sino-Tibetan Lexical Comparisons*. Monumenta Serica Monograph Series, XVIII. Nettetal: Steyler, 1986. 186 pages.

This book is a godsend for those China scholars who have an interest in the linguistic affiliations of Sinitic languages but who have no expertise in Tibetan. It is extremely easy to use, the main entries being listed alphabetically under semantic groups of English equivalents (e.g. "loosen / release / throw" [\*\**pjang*], "loving / kind" [\*\**mdzjəγ*], etc.). There are two indexes, one to Tibetan forms in the data and one to Chinese forms. The former is arranged, as is customary with Tibetan dictionaries, according to the first letter of the words that are actually pronounced. The latter is by total stroke count of the tetragraphs and within each numerical group by the order of Morohashi's *Daikanwa Jiten*.

In the introduction, Coblin describes his own conversion from skepticism to acceptance of the Sino-Tibetan hypothesis. The 489 lexical comparisons which he presents in the body of his handlist are the bulk of the data which convinced him that Sinitic languages and Tibeto-Burman languages "must have descended from a common proto-language." The correspondences of sounds among the various member languages are sufficiently systematic that Coblin, following the work of Paul Benedict, Nicholas Bodman, Hwang-cherng Gong, and others, has been able to work out a tentative sound system for Sino-Tibetan.

The data are persuasive, but the origins of the Sinitic group of languages are vastly complicated and will require an enormous amount of effort before they are clarified. For the last century, the impact of European languages on Sinitic grammar and lexicon have been tremendous. Probably just as significant was the effect of the languages of the various Altaic peoples who ruled China during most of the preceding millennium and more. Sanskrit, Prakrit, Sogdian, Tocharian, and other Buddhist languages also helped to shape the development of the Sinitic group during the first millennium of the International Era. Even more disconcerting are the linguistic and

archeological proofs of massive borrowing from other peoples scattered across the Eurasian landmass, especially the Indo-Europeans, during the Shang and Zhou periods. Nor should we overlook the absorption of many local non-Sinitic peoples and elements of their languages into the dominant ethno-polity of China. These include the Ngwag (Wu), Viet (Yue), Tai, [Tsh]ryag<sup>?</sup>[?] (Chu), and numerous other groups.

Our present understanding of the formation of the Sinitic language group is so confused that I suspect many decades of hard work by dozens of talented and dedicated scholars will be required before we are able to see with assurance exactly where it belongs in the overall scope of classification of the world's languages. South Coblin is one such scholar. We are indebted to him both for his careful scholarship and for his willingness to take a stand in a swiftly evolving field.

ZHOU Zhenhe and YOU Rujie. *Fangyan yu Zhongguo Wenhua [Topolects and Chinese Culture]*. Zhongguo Wenhua Shi Congshu [History of Chinese Culture Series]. Taipei: Southern Materials Center, 1988. 3 + 286 pages.

This could have been an important book. Because the authors were unwilling to break with established dogma on the nature of *fangyan* ("topolects"), it is instead but a collection of fascinating information on language use in China that is fairly close to ground level.

After some very general comments on the relationship between language and culture, Zhou and You run smack into the problem of how many Han (i.e. Sinitic) languages there are in China. Although they raise the possibility (p. 6) that some of the major topolects might be considered as separate languages, in the end they bow to convention (*guonei yuyanxue jie de yiban kanfa*, as they put it so nicely), declaring that in all of China there is only one Sinitic language and that it is spoken by more than 98% of the entire population. The other one odd percent presumably speak a welter of Sino-Tibetan, Altaic, Polynesian, and Austronesian languages that can be classified with great accuracy into numerous branches. It is strange that, among those supposed billion speakers of Hanyu (Sinitic) that span the length and breadth of the country, there are no branches. In spite of the fact that mutual intelligibility among the billion speakers of Sinitic is low to nonexistent in most cases, we are asked to believe that they are all speaking the same language. Ridiculous though it may seem, this is the position taken by virtually all Chinese linguists. As I have frequently pointed out elsewhere, such definitions of language are political and not linguistic. Hence, given the political realities of China today, we cannot expect that the inaccuracies of linguistic terminology with regard to language usage in China will soon be rectified. It is our duty as conscientious scholars, however, to point them out whenever and wherever possible in hopes that our efforts will contribute to a gradual amelioration.

Zhou and You assume that at some point in the distant past there was an "ancient Sinitic" (*Gu Hanyu*) and that there is a straight line running from it all the way to Modern Mandarin (*guanhua*). All of the other Sinitic "dialects" (to use their expression) fork off from this single trunk during the course of history. This is contradicted by historical data, however, which show that Mandarin is **least like Middle and Old Sinitic** among the various major "dialects." Not only does their scheme, which is almost universally accepted, ignore the realities of an Altaicization in the north that persisted for well over a thousand years and was so massive as to change virtually all aspects of Sinitic radically, it also fails to take into account the extremely complicated questions of the formation of Proto-Sinitic itself. The authors are to be commended, however, for recognizing that the roots of Min (Fukienese), Yue (Cantonese), and Wu (Shanghai-Soochow) do not lie entirely within Sinitic. They correctly indicate that these modern topolects are the result of a process of amalgamation and absorption by Sinitic of the ancient \*<sup>7</sup>viet speakers who originally occupied these areas. The amount of work that would have to be done to sort out the components which come from \*<sup>7</sup>viet languages and those that come from Sinitic is mind-boggling.

The third chapter discusses the interesting question of immigration and topolects. When people move from one area to another, they naturally bring their own language with them. Whether

or not they are able to preserve it after several generations is dependent on a number of interlocking factors: how cohesive is the group? how large is it? how different is the group's language from that of the people living in the areas into which it is moving? is the new homeland densely or sparsely populated? are the immigrants politically dominant? Zhou and You are able to note the existence of such language transfers in both historical times and in the modern period. One of the most important movements they document is the gradual spread of Mandarin (*guanhua*) southwards and its displacement of other languages (e.g., the so-called Wu [*< Ngeu*] dialect). The same phenomenon took place in the north as well, occasionally very rapidly as with Manchu. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to describe with precision the actual process of language replacement, especially if the language that is absorbed is essentially unwritten, i.e. does not have its own script.

The great authority on so-called Minnan (< Minlam) dialects, Wu Shouli, has spent his entire adult life attempting to reconstruct the written language of his ancestors. Much as I respect his determination and that of his other compatriots who are engaged in this task (e.g. Robert Cheng), it is futile. Once the investigator attempts to write a non-standard topolectal word down in tetragraphs, he is bound to become enmeshed in two insoluble tangles that are endemic to the script. Let me give just a single example.

One of the most common expressions in Taiwanese is *thittho* which means "to enjoy [oneself]." During the time I was living in Taiwan, I heard the word *thittho* used an average of two or three times a day in casual conversations among Taiwanese. In fact, aside from *tsiahbǒng* ("to eat"), it seemed to be the most frequent disyllabic verb I could catch. Most non-Taiwanese-speaking mainlanders I know, when pressed to write this word down (assuming they have paid any attention to it during their forty years on the island), record it as *titou* 抬頭 ("raise head") or some such equally improbable concatenation of morphemes. A few earnest linguists have even proposed that it is but the corruption by benighted Taiwanese of the Modern Standard Mandarin expression *xiaoyao* 逍遙. This has the advantage of bearing an approximately correct meaning. Furthermore, it is a real Sinitic word going all the way back to the *Poetry Classic*, the *Chu Lyrics*, and -- best known of all -- the first chapter of *Master Zhuang*. Phonologically, however, it will not wash. No matter how hard we try, if we are honest, we must admit that *xiaoyao*, even in its ancient, archaic, and topolectal pronunciations, simply does not match *thittho*. Even more obscurantist scholars delve into that answer to all prayers of tetragraphic devotees, the *Shuowen [Explanation of Script]* and come up with *thik* 𠂔 and *thiok* 𠂔 which are supposed to have something to do with the manner in which one walks. Other early philologists inform us that *thik* and *thok* separately mean "step with left foot" and "step with right foot." When joined together, they are said miraculously to form 𠂔𠂔 (pronounced *xing* in Modern Standard Mandarin). Of course, this all a lot of learned nonsense, and it is both a tragedy and a farce that Chinese scholars have filled their own minds and the minds of their countrymen with this kind of idiocy for two millennia. Such pervasive speciousness in the literate culture has done untold damage to the national psyche.

Be that as it may, what must the poor Taiwanese do when they want to write down this perfectly legitimate word in their language? They could follow the Amoyese who write *t'ikr'o* 七拈 ("seven shoulderloads" [*qi tiao* in MSM]) or the people in Chaozhou who write *t'ikr'o* 剔拈 ("scrape off shoulderload" [*ti tiao* in MSM]), but these are so utterly inappropriate that it almost reduces one to tears. Usually, if the Taiwanese are ever so bold as to attempt to write Taiwanese at all, *thittho* appears as 𠂔 𠂔. Now, this is passing strange because these two obscure characters are pronounced *chittho* in Taiwanese. Unabridged character dictionaries, furthermore, tell us that the first graph supposedly means "near" and the second graph means "slandorous" or the like. I am dubious. One thing is certain, though, and it is that these two graphs are both phonemically and morphemically completely inappropriate to write out *thittho*. In fact, it may well be impossible to write *thittho* accurately with the present set of 60,000+ tetragraphs. The solution? Invent two more graphs. Or write Taiwanese with a phonetic script. If the Taiwanese wish to preserve their language -- particularly for literary and scientific purposes -- they will certainly choose the latter

course. If, however, they are more concerned about maintaining their ties with mainstream Sinitic culture, they will choose the former course. The choice is up to them and is a reflection of their political and ethnic predisposition. It has precious little to do with linguistic verities.

This is only one tiny example of the himalayan problems speakers of the nonstandard topolects face when they attempt to write their languages in tetragraphs. The same kind of difficulties exist across the board for Taiwanese (not only for lexical items but for grammar and syntax as well) and are even worse for other topolects that exist strictly in the spoken realm. For all of these reasons and many more which are beyond the scope of this review, I regret to say that Professor Wu Shouli's quest is hopeless -- unless he switches to a phonetic script.

The absorption of topolectal items and expressions from other languages into the standard Sinitic lexicon has throughout history been an extraordinarily complicated phenomenon. Linguistic borrowing is always intricate, but the complexity is exacerbated when one or more of the scripts involved is not purely phonetic. Thus the semantic interference of the tetragraphs wreaks havoc with our understanding of historical language contact. For example, students often wonder about the second syllable of *mantou* ("steamed bun"). Does it really have anything to do with the notion of "head"? No, that is obvious, even though nativist diehards insist that it is called "*man*-head" because it is round like a man's head! Well, then, is the *-tou* merely adventitious? The answer to this question is likewise in the negative because the same syllable also forms an integral part of many other Sinitic nouns: *guantou* ("can"), *zhuantou[r]* ("profit"), *mutou* ("wood, log"), *pintou* ("paramour"), *shitou* ("rock"), *kutou[r]* ("suffering"). These and dozens of other words make clear that *-tou[r]* is a very productive suffix for forming both abstract and concrete nouns and that, in most cases, it is hard to imagine that the words in question are even remotely related to the idea of "head." (Ditto for *-zi* ["son"], but this is not the place to mention specific examples.) In any event, the *-tou* part of *mantou* is very old and can be well documented at least back to the Song period. The word *mantou* originally referred to steamed buns regardless of whether or not they had fillings, but now it is used exclusively in MSM for unfilled steamed buns, the term *baozi* being reserved for filled steamed buns (both *mantou* and *baozi* are leavened).

My fascination with the origins and structure of the word *mantou* peaked two summers ago when I was travelling through Soviet Central Asia. To my great astonishment, I found that there is in Russian the word *mantei* which means, believe it or not, "[Siberian] steamed bun." It would seem that Russian *mantei* and MSM *mantou* must ultimately go back to the same word. Conceivably, the Russians borrowed the word from Sinitic, perhaps through some Central Asian Altaic or Siberian languages. I suspect, however, that both Russian and Sinitic received it from another language. The clue for this in the Chinese case is that the *-tou* portion does not mean "head," whereas in the Russian case it is widely recognized that *mantei* is not a Slavic word. The challenge is to identify the source of *mantei* and then to determine the morphological significance of the *-tei* portion. If it has a similar function to *-tou* in *mantou*, this would be an extremely important discovery and would open up an entirely new avenue of linguistic analysis for the study of Sinitic languages.

The point of all this is that the study of Sinitic topolects, like the study of Sinitic languages in general, will be greatly enhanced if we begin to look at the sounds and meanings of words apart from the tetragraphs. For the tetragraphs not only tend to camouflage the sounds of words that have not been in the standard language all along, they often skew their meanings as well. Steamed bun-head indeed!

In spite of these criticisms, Zhou and You provide a wealth of valuable material on topolects gleaned from a wide variety of primary and secondary sources. They display a keen sense of geography and its implications for the growth of languages and topolects. Their research on historical geolinguistics is particularly valuable. Another contribution of the authors is their study of domesticated plant names which reveals the absorption of non-Sinitic peoples in the expanding Chinese polity throughout history. Their fifth chapter, which is on this subject, is really quite brilliant and fully deserves translation into English. Other interesting chapters deal with toponyms, topolectal expressions and regional musical styles in drama and fiction, topolects and folklore,

and languages in contact. The book is provided with about two dozen maps and numerous charts.

I will end, as do Zhou and You, with a brief discussion of Pidgin which, in one sense, may be regarded as a dialect of English because it is one variety of that tongue. In another sense, however, it may be regarded as a Chinese topolect because it is spoken by Chinese (at least the *yangjingbang* [Shanghai] type is). Some very curious things happen to English when it is transformed into a Chinese topolect. Grammatical niceties such as number, tense, and gender are tossed aside. But that is only the beginning. "No," for example, becomes "yes" (言若 Shanghai *nəu*, MSM *nuo*). "Sit down" becomes "snow hall" (雪堂 Shanghai *siy' dɔŋ*, MSM *xuetang*). "Father" is "send tea" (發茶 Shanghai *fa' zo*, MSM *fa cha*), and "mother" is "sell tea" (賣茶 Shanghai *mɔ zo*, MSM *mai cha*). "Drink tea," oddly enough, is "raise ladder" (堯梯 Shanghai *tɕiæ t'i*, MSM *qiao ti*). Now this is truly amazing, because both syllables can be traced right back through the Pidgin English to the Sinitic words 吃茶 which are pronounced *chi cha* in MSM and *tɕ'iə' zo* around Shanghai, but *k'ik te* in Fukien, *te* being the origin of our English word. Thus we have the Pidgin equivalent of "drink tea" being written with one Chinese character meaning "to raise" glossing a Sinitic word borrowed into English locally by old China hands resident in Shanghai (*chiltɕ'iə'* for "eat→drink") and another character glossing a second word borrowed into mainstream English hundreds of years earlier and from a source hundreds of miles to the south (MSM *cha* / Fukienese *te* = tea) with a word meaning "ladder." If that seems incredibly confusing, it is meant to be because it reflects the real situation.

As to where "tea" ultimately comes from, it is clear that there is basically only one word in the entire world for this beverage, that the plant was first cultivated in the Assam-Burma region, that it passed into the Chinese orbit, as might be expected, through Yunnan and Szechwan, and that the graph 茶 (MSM *cha*) was not used until the Tang period (when northern Chinese became accustomed to tea-drinking) although 荼 (MSM *tu*), which occurs in the *Poetry Classic* and other early Chinese texts, indubitably represents the same word. Zhou and You give us many helpful insights on "tea" (pp. 130-132, 246), but they have only scratched the surface of this typical Sinitic enigma and other mysteries of language usage in China. They deserve our gratitude for taking us as far as they have. Let us hope that they continue their joint researches and take us even further in the future.

Note: After I finished this review, Hugh Clark gave me a book with the same exact title, authors, and series name that was published by Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe in 1986. The two books are virtually identical, even down to the copying of errors (e.g. "chowmei" for "chow mein" on p. 249), except for two aspects, one negative and one positive. The negative aspect is that the Taiwan publisher has dropped the preface by the series editor, Zhou Gucheng. In a way, however, I cannot really blame him because it is one of those emotional and patriotic appeals to the pride of the race that does not really belong in an academic work (or anywhere, for that matter). The positive aspect is that the Taiwan publisher has gone to the trouble of resetting the entire book, including the maps and charts, in complicated characters instead of the simplified ones of the original. I consider this a great improvement because the quotations from old texts are much easier to read now.

CHOU Fa-kao. *Papers in Chinese Linguistics and Epigraphy*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press of Hong Kong, 1986. vii + 143 pages.

This is a collection of eleven articles and two summaries by the dean of Chinese linguistics in the Republic of China. They were originally written between 1961 and 1984. While I am impressed by Chou's command of primary and secondary bibliographical sources, knack for choosing significant topics, forceful argumentation, and clear presentation, I am hesitant to accept many of his basic presuppositions and conclusions.

The very first sentence of the book, though short and forthright, is full of so many problems

that I found it difficult to continue to the second sentence. "Chinese," declares Chou, "is a monosyllabic, analytic and tonal language." First of all, I do not accept that "Chinese," in the diachronic sense used by Chou and most historical linguists, is a single language. Rather, I see Chinese (better designated as Sinitic to distinguish it from the dozens of other non-Han languages in the political entity we know as China) as a language group consisting of at least eight major, mutually unintelligible languages. (I have argued this position in detail in a forthcoming article entitled "What Is a Chinese 'Dialect / Topolect'? Reflections on Some Key Sino-English Linguistic Terms.") Nor can I admit that Chinese, whatever that may be, is monosyllabic. One of the articles in this book ("Monosyllabism of Chinese Reconsidered") concedes -- in response to the persuasive discussions on the subject by George Kennedy and John DeFrancis -- that Sinitic words cannot be considered to be exclusively or even primarily monosyllabic. We now know from massive statistical studies that the average length of a MSM word is almost exactly two syllables, although just as in English some are one syllable in length and some are three, four, or more syllables long. Chou concludes (p. 75) that while Sinitic words may not be monosyllabic, its morphemes are. This, too, is erroneous and Chou gives not a shred of evidence to support his claim. Unfortunately, virtually all who subscribe to the monosyllabic myth cling to this fantasy as the last best hope for sustaining their convictions.

As I have pointed out on numerous occasions, Sinitic languages have a tremendous amount of polysyllabic words (*boli* ["glass"], *putao* ["grape"], *zhizhu* ["spider"], *shanhu* ["coral"], *shabulengdengde* ["daffy"], *pingpong* ["table tennis"], *jiejue* ["mosquito larvae"], Chang'e [name of moon goddess], etc.) all or part of whose constituent elements cannot stand alone and which have no identifiable meaning when isolated. Hence, in some cases, a Chinese morpheme must be longer than a syllable. In other cases, however, a Sinitic morpheme is less than a syllable in length. In highly colloquial spoken Pekingese, we continually hear such expressions as *burdao* (2 syllables -- "don't know") in speech which would appear in the script as though it were pronounced *bu zhidao* (3 syllables -- "do not know") or *dianrtai* (2 syllables -- "TV station") which would be written in characters as though it were pronounced *dianshitai* (3 syllables -- "television station"). The well-known retroflex *-r*, likewise, has morphemic value but is less than a syllable in length (see the review of the book by Li Sijing elsewhere in this issue).

All that we can say about monosyllabism in Sinitic languages is that the **script** is almost entirely monosyllabic (but note 書 [tushuguan, "library," seen on a plaque over the rare book room of the Peking National Library in 1981], 瓦 [qianwa, "kilowatt"], and dozens of other "vulgar" polysyllabic graphs). The monosyllabic myth is purely an artifact of the script. The length of the average Sinitic morpheme is probably not too much different from that of an English morpheme (1.68 syllables), although exhaustive studies would need to be carried out to determine the exact length of the average morpheme in, say, Modern Standard Mandarin or the Soochow topolect.

The first article of Chou's book might have been a *tour de force* in that it attempts to compress "Stages in the Development of the [sic] Chinese Language" from 1300 B.I.E. to 1911+ into three pages. Aside from the fact that it operates wholly under the delusory premises that there has only been one Chinese (i.e. Sinitic) language throughout all time and space, the most egregious conceptual error in this paper is that it treats vernacular Sinitic as just another stage in the development of the Classical language that began around the first century. Chou makes no acknowledgment of the fact that the Classical written language continued to dominate and evolve for nearly 2,000 more years after that time and, indeed, that vernacular Sinitic was not even officially recognized as a legitimate means of written expression until 1919. Chou seems to believe, like most other Sinologists, that vernacular Chinese did not exist before the first century.

The second paper is supposedly about "Word Classes in Classical Chinese," specifically the *Mencius*. Chou sets up the categories of "full" and "listable" plus their opposites "unlistable" and "empty." Since he neither defines them adequately nor draws any conclusions from his data, the paper degenerates into a mere recording of the number of occurrences of various graphs in the text.

"Reduplicatives in the *Book of Odes*" is a handy compilation and analysis of the various

types of alliterative, rhyming, and identical binoms in the *Poetry Classic* culled from Bernhard Karlgren's transcription and translation of the text (Stockholm, 1950).

The next chapter is a review of W.A.C.H. Dobson's *Early Archaic Chinese: A Descriptive Grammar*. Some of Chou's criticisms, as stated, are merely differences of opinion. Many, however, are useful observations, suggestions, and corrections.

The bulk of "A Comparative Study of the Simplified Characters as Used in Mainland China, Singapore and Japan" are two tables densely packed with the simplified and full forms of hundreds of characters and two tables giving their components. For the most part, the article is just a listing of data, though Chou makes plain his motivation for writing it in the final paragraph:

In conclusion, the standardization of Chinese characters in Japan has been carried out carefully and seriously. Since 1919, within the last sixty years, only 354 items with simplified forms are listed in "[Table] III [which lists officially sanctioned *kanji* used in Japan]." On the other hand, in Mainland China, around 3,000 simplified characters have been officially announced within the last twenty-three years and hundreds of new simplified characters are being created by the Chinese people. Fortunately, in the *Twenty-four Books of History* = 二十四史 punctuated and published by the Chung Hua Book Company, simplified characters are not used. Otherwise it may cause much confusion and inconveniences. Moreover, school children in Japan are taught not only the use of the 1,926 Chinese characters, but also their stroke order. Unfortunately this procedure is neglected by the modern Chinese people. (pp. 58-59)

"On the Structure of the Rime Tables in the *Yün-ching*" was occasioned by the appearance of Mantaro Hashimoto's *Phonology of Ancient Chinese* in 1978-79. It is beyond my competence to comment upon or judge this article.

"Hsüan-ying's *Fan-ch'ieh* System Reconsidered" was written in response to Wang Li's 1982 paper on the "cut and splice" spelling method in the *Yiqie Jing Yin Yi* [*Sounds and Meanings of All the Sūtras*] which, in turn, was probably prompted by Chou's 1948 article on the same subject. The main topic of discussion is to establish the initials and finals of Hsüan-ying's (Xuanying, a disciple of Xuanzang [596-664]) and then to compare them with those in the *Qieyun* [*Cut Rhymes*] (601 I.E.) of Lu Fayan and the phonetic glosses (presumably based on the Chang'an dialect) of Yan Shigu (581-645).

In "Certain Dates of the Shang Period," Chou engages in a debate with Dong Zuobin and Homer Dubs on six lunar eclipses recorded in the oracle bones. The three scholars differ by as much as 175 years for a given eclipse, but Chou tends to agree more closely with Dubs than with Dong. The big prize is to establish the correct date of the conquest of the Shang by the Zhou. Bernhard Karlgren's 1027 B.I.E., supported by the *Bamboo Annals*, is dismissed by Chou on the grounds that it does not tally with Dong's calendar for the Western Zhou, a rather frail and circular sort of reasoning. Recent studies by Edward Shaughnessy, David Nivison, and David Pankenier make much of this article obsolete.

"On the Dating of a Lunar Eclipse in the Shang Period" centers around the problem of when night ended and day began in the Shang calendrical system. Here Chou is squarely in Dubs's camp.

"The Study of Ancient Bronze Inscriptions in the Last Thirty Years" is essentially a state of the field essay. It is mostly descriptive but does offer a few critical remarks. The large bibliography includes 127 items in Chinese, Japanese, and English.

The two short summaries at the end of the book deal with Western Zhou chronology. The papers on which they are based both accept David Nivison's 1045 B.I.E. as the date of the conquest of the Shang.

ZENG Zifan. *Guangzhouhua Putonghua Duibi Qutan [Interesting Parallels between Cantonese and Mandarin]*. Hong Kong: Joint, 1989. xi + 191 pages.

This book is part of a series designed to encourage residents of Hong Kong to speak Modern Standard Mandarin. It consists of a number of very brief essays (most are under a page in length) on a variety of topics. The first third of the book introduces phonological differences between the two languages, the latter two-thirds lexical differences. There are also three short appendices that offer a superficial treatment of China's supposedly "shared" language (*gongtongyu*), its allegedly "common" speech (Putonghua), and the relationships among the three types of Mandarin as it is used in the People's Republic, on Taiwan, and in Singapore. As is typical of contrastive studies between Mandarin and Cantonese, there is no discussion of grammar. The usual presupposition, of course, is that they are identical, but that is simply because no one has ever made a systematic, thoroughgoing comparison of the two languages.

Many of the essays are, indeed humorous but often at the expense of the Cantonese speaker. Even when a person from Hong Kong is referring to the place where he lives, the poor man is chided for pronouncing its name incorrectly! The underlying assumption is that Mandarin is somehow more "correct" than Cantonese, even for the pronunciation of purely Cantonese words. This is a perverse attitude, for Cantonese surely know how to pronounce their own language. Furthermore, many words that sound right and natural in Cantonese may sound awkward in Mandarin. A good example is *dekshī* ("taxi") which comes out as *dishī* in Mandarin or *həy bindou* ("Where [did he] go?") which is rendered as *qu biandu* in MSM.

A curious phenomenon is the borrowing of authentic Cantonese terms into Mandarin. Cut off from their linguistic moorings, they are only half understood in their new environment. I myself have used the expression *shisandian* to describe a girl who is missing a few nuts and bolts, but never realized that it had a Cantonese origin and did not fully comprehend its meaning until reading this book. Similarly, *T-shəet* ("T-shirt") makes perfectly good sense in Cantonese, and since Mandarin has no precise word to designate this item of clothing, it is reasonable that it should be borrowed into the latter language. Unfortunately, the two graphs used to write it, T 衤, are pronounced *Tixu* in Mandarin Standard Mandarin which makes one think of "tissue" at best or "dead-end pity" at worst. There are even MSM extremists who insist that the two graphs in question should be pronounced *dingxu*. One wonders whether they intend by this pronunciation to convey the meaning "adult male pity."

My impression, both from reading this book and from travelling through China, is that Cantonese is a spoken language rooted in a specific region that has a number local dialects and seldom occurs in written form. Conversely, MSM (so-called Putonghua) is a rootless, government-sanctioned written medium with an artificial pronunciation based on (but not identical to) Pekingese and whose vocabulary and grammar are drawn primarily from the northern topolects but which also includes elements absorbed from southern topolects and even a significant amount of influence from non-Sinitic, especially Altaic and Indo-European, languages. This is confirmed by Robert Sanders' "The Four Languages of 'Mandarin'" (*Sino-Platonic Papers*, 4 [November, 1987]) and the preliminary results of the huge research project in which he is currently engaged.

Luciana Bressan. *La Determinazione delle Norme Ortografiche del Pinyin*. Istituto Universitario Orientale, Dipartimento di Studi Asiatici, Series Minor, 28. Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1986. 194 pages.

This is the first monograph in a Western language to confront head-on the emerging reality of Pinyin as an alternative script to the tetragraphs. It is systematic, thorough, and based on the best Chinese sources and authorities. Bressan does not pretend that all the problems surrounding the creation of a functional alphabetical script for China have already been solved. Instead, she outlines the various difficulties faced by script reformers in establishing a Pinyin orthography and

the various means by which they have been overcome or are being overcome.

The first chapter begins with a look at the nature of the tetragraphic Chinese writing system. Only the most fundamental aspects are addressed before she quickly moves on to a discussion of such interesting questions as that of transcription, the differences between classical and vernacular varieties of Sinitic and between written and spoken forms. These are key issues for anyone who hopes to achieve a workable alphabetical script for China. In §1.4.3, Bressan introduces the crucial distinction between primary and secondary transcriptions (*trascrizione 1* and *trascrizione 2*). In the Sinitic case, the latter is a transcription of single tetragraphs, that is, it constitutes a method for indicating the sounds of another script. The former, in contrast, is a means for notating the sounds of speech. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of language reform aims and activities in China during the late twenties, thirties, and forties.

Chapter 2 details the flurry of language reform efforts directed toward the phoneticization of Modern Standard Mandarin (MSM) just after the founding of the PRC. The author looks back as far as the late Qing period to put in context the debates on specific points considered by the PRC language reformers during the fifties. Would their new phonetic script be national or international in form? How would it treat the phonemes of MSM? What were the purposes of the new script?

Chapter 3 moves from the fifties into the sixties and shows how the Hanyu Pinyin Fang'an ("Scheme for a Sinitic Alphabet") was put into practice in its initial stages. Among its earliest applications were serving as a powerful tool in the campaigns against China's massive illiteracy and in the diffusion of MSM (Putonghua). It was only through actual use that the limitations of the Pinyin scheme were discovered. Among other things, the necessity to adopt a written style that was both "sayable" and "listenable" became a *sine qua non* for intelligibility and clarity. It may have been possible to ignore these criteria when relying on the tetragraphs, but adoption of a phonetic script brought them to the fore. In the words of Lyu Shuxiang quoted by Bressan (p. 53), "the style of a text is intimately related to the type of script used." But because of political factors and an unwillingness to progress toward full phoneticization too quickly, these topics remained largely theoretical during the next two decades. Consequently, reformers directed their energies toward such matters as how to arrange Pinyin glossaries, the adoption of Pinyin for Braille to aid the blind and for sign language to assist the deaf and dumb, the diffusion of Pinyin in telegraphy, the devising of compatible phonetic alphabets for a number of China's non-Sinitic peoples, setting up of Pinyin computer codes, use of Pinyin for trade names and cataloging, and so forth. It is revealing that Chinese language reformers spent a great deal of energy lobbying for the acceptance of Pinyin as a worldwide standard of transcription for MSM. Perhaps they felt that if Pinyin were an established fact outside of China, it might put pressure on the foot-dragging conservatives to permit further advances at home. (One is reminded of Sun Yat-sen's successful agitation for revolution from outside of China.) Much of the latter part of this chapter documents the slow and deliberate intrigues of the reformers as they circumvented the obstructionists by whatever means possible.

It is only in chapter 4 that Bressan addresses the question of orthographic norms for Pinyin. Once again, this requires a review of the history of accomplishments earlier in the century. The significance of National Romanization (Gwoyeu Romatzyh) in this regard was by no means negligible. China's best linguistic minds wrestled with grammatical and syntactical structures, the difference between morpheme and word, and a host of other relevant subjects that could be disregarded with a tetragraphic script. Linguistic issues of great complexity now began to surface and Bressan does a commendable job of presenting them in a manner that is not overly technical. Regardless of the political and linguistic difficulties, however, one thing is certain. The momentum of the seventies gained from extensive experimentation with Pinyin in admittedly limited areas meant that its evolution from a system for transcription to a full-fledged script was inevitable.

In chapter 5 (the last), no holds are barred. A committee charged with the drawing up of orthographic rules for Pinyin was named in 1982. By 1984, they had prepared and published a tentative version of the Basic Rules for the Orthography of Sinitic Spelling (Hanyu Pinyin Zhengcifa Jiben Guize). These are translated into Italian by Bressan as an appendix on pp.

157-168. They were slightly revised and reissued in 1988 without the designation "tentative." While its authors are careful nowhere to imply that they are advocating Pinyin as an independent, alternative script for MSM, the implications are clear. The orthographic rules, in spite of their imperfections and incompleteness, have opened a path for those who wish to write in Pinyin instead of with tetragraphs. The transition from "transcription 2" to "transcription 1" is already underway and is probably irreversible. As the Pinyin script continues to be refined, Bressan concludes (following John DeFrancis) that China is entering a period of digraphia.

JIANG Shaoyu and XU Changhua, tr. *Zhongguoyu Lishi Wenfa [A Historical Grammar of Modern Chinese]*. Peking: Peking University Press, 1987.

This is a much-needed and long-awaited Modern Standard Mandarin (MSM) translation of Ōta Tatsuo's *Chūgoku Rekishi Bunpō* (Tokyo: Kōnan shoin, 1958). Ōta's grammar has always been hard to get hold of, even in Japanese. Furthermore, it is still by far the best historical account of Chinese grammar in any language. Couple this with the fact that Chinese linguists do not read Japanese and it is clear that the present translation is long overdue.

In general, we should be grateful for the contribution of Jiang and Xu. I do, however, have a few observations that may be worthy of consideration for future translators of Sinological works into MSM. The first is that, where Ōta accurately cites early Chinese sources in the form that he found them, the Chinese version converts everything into simplified characters. This can be very misleading, if not downright erroneous. What was *dou* ("wrangling") in Ōta (p. 16) comes out in Jiang and Xu (p. 107) as *dou* ("peck"). Some early vernacular texts use old simplified characters while others use full forms for *shenme* ("what"), but Jiang and Xu make no distinction in this regard. The handling of *xiang* ("toward"), which has three variant tetragraphic orthographies in the texts cited by Ōta, is even more atrocious because the MSM translators add a fourth. The unwarranted substitution of modern simplified forms for various words pronounced *yu* is so confusing that I dare not attempt to make sense of it in this review which has to cover other ground as well. It ought to be a relatively simple matter for Chinese authors, translators, and typesetters who quote premodern texts to preserve them in their original guise, even if their explanations and analyses in MSM are obligatorily written with simplified characters.

The second point I would like to make is that Jiang and Xu have blithely omitted all of Ōta's translations of the cited texts. So immune to the need for providing translations of any premodern Chinese expressions into MSM are Jiang and Xu that they ludicrously repeat (p. 303) Ōta's five very helpful Japanese renderings of *keshi* in Japanese for their Chinese readers! Not only is this an utterly useless gesture, it is tantamount to an unintended insult. Similar instances occur elsewhere in the version of Jiang and Xu. While one might make a case that there is no reason for translating vernacular Chinese passages into MSM (although I would definitely contest this when it comes to early vernacular texts such as *bianwen* ["transformation texts"] which are hard to interpret even for specialists), most Chinese readers of the Classical Chinese texts referred to by Ōta are as much in need of translations into MSM as anyone else who is likely to consult his grammar. It should no longer be assumed that quotation of a Classical Chinese passage by anyone automatically implies comprehension of that passage. I strongly urge Chinese scholars and all other Sinologists to translate into modern vernaculars all cited passages. Not to do so often results in a mere charade of scholarship.

A third point is that Jiang and Xu have omitted all of Ōta's emphases and a portion of other punctuation marks employed by him. The net result is that it is harder to spot the operative elements in the illustrative sentences of the Chinese version than it is in the Japanese version.

Newly added to the Chinese translation are the following: a preface by Zhu Dexi, a preface by Ōta, a table of corresponding technical linguistic terms in MSM and Japanese, a bibliography of works by Ōta (titles given only in MSM translation), and an Afterword by the translators. Aside from these differences and those pointed out above, the Mandarin version follows the Japanese

rather closely.

Keith McMahon, et al. *Expository Writing in Chinese*. International Studies, East Asian Language Texts, No. 5. Lawrence, Kansas: The University of Kansas Center for East Asian Studies, n.d. iii + 190 pages.

On the back of the title page of this book may be found the following acknowledgement:

The research herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, under the provisions of Title VI, Section 602, N.D.E.A. as amended.

The grant ran over two years, paid for the services of half-a-dozen authors and consultants, and cost the American taxpayers more than six digits worth of dollars. Considering the results, the project is a prime candidate for the Golden Fleece Awards.

If ever there were a language text that may be characterized as *bulun-bulei* ("not belonging to any category"), this is it. Superficially, it would appear to be a reader that might be used in second semester third-year or fourth-year Mandarin courses. The texts for the first ten lessons (which were written by Keith McMahon and Jen-mei Ma) include two letters to friends, an anecdote, a short travel essay, a formal letter, an expository essay on Chinese mythology (an unspecified portion of which is taken from a 1957 work of Yuan Ke), a discussion about Chinese medicine, an appreciation of a Chinese poem, and an essay on Chinese landscape painting. Each of these first ten lessons is followed by notes written in English explaining the classical usages and other special features therein and example sentences for the more obvious classicisms. An alphabetical index to the items discussed in the notes follows the tenth lesson.

After that come eight supplementary texts by a variety of twentieth-century writers, some well known (e.g., Lao She, Guo Moruo, Mao Dun) and the others less so or not at all. The editors twice confuse an author's pen name (Yang Mu, Qi Jun) with his or her real name (Wang Jingxian, Pan Xizhen). None of the texts rank among the more distinguished literary products of the age. The format for the supplementary exercises changes somewhat, so that the few notes which are given (mostly in Chinese but with a slight admixture of English) are combined into one section with the example sentences. Short biographical sketches of the authors are also provided. The book concludes with an alphabetized index for the supplementary lessons.

It is clear from the introduction by Wallace Johnson that *Expository Writing* was **not** intended for use as a reader. Quite the contrary, the explicit purpose for the entire project was to encourage students to write in a bastardized *banwen-banbai* ("semi-classical semi-vernacular") style. The idea seems to be that the more outmoded classical elements one can squeeze into one's writing, the more "literate" one will be. This is ironic for several reasons, not the least of which is that the three best examples of expository prose in the entire book (those by Lao She, Guo Moruo, and Mao Dun) are also -- not by accident -- the most vernacular! Indeed, there almost seems to be a negative correlation between the number of classicisms in Modern Standard Mandarin writing and the quality of the prose.

The most atrociously obscure and illogical letters I receive from Chinese scholars and acquaintances tend to be written in an ornate, affected pseudo-classical style. Conversely, the most well-reasoned, pellucid letters approximate the cadences and patterns of educated speech. Increasingly, these are being composed in Pinyin (romanization) on computers with no loss of intelligibility or depth. Pedantic archaisms are often no more than arrogant camouflage for a lack of genuine substance. Johnson himself subconsciously recognizes this when he states that "The level of difficulty in lesson five and some later lessons is probably beyond what many students will attain, and for that matter is beyond what some Chinese writers might find appropriate."

The Chinese people have been struggling since the May Fourth Movement to reduce the

unfortunate and inhibitive gulf between the written and spoken realms. We should not drag them back to where they were three quarters of a century ago.

P. C. T'ung and D. E. Pollard. *Colloquial Chinese*. Colloquial Series. London, Boston, Melbourne, and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982 and reprints. vi + 322 pages.

For someone who wants to learn Modern Standard Mandarin (MSM) without having to endure the tortures of the tetragraphs, i.e., she only wants to become proficient in the spoken language, this is an excellent guide. It may be used for self-instruction or for classroom purposes with equally impressive results. A cassette reading is available from the publisher and supplementary materials may be obtained from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London where the authors have taught for many years.

The entire presentation is succinct, elegant, and thoroughly well conceived. The text begins with a brief introduction that covers the roles of MSM and romanization in China, the concept of word (short but by and large linguistically sound), tones and intonation, word order, the lay-out of the lessons (see below), and general remarks on the sayability, grammar, and syntax of MSM as presented in this book. Two pages suffice to introduce the sound system of MSM.

Altogether there are seventeen lessons, each one consisting of "presentation" (which might be thought of as sample sentences for introducing grammar and vocabulary in context), dialogues, vocabulary with parts of speech clearly indicated, extremely clear and concise discussions of grammar, speech patterns, well-designed drills, and straightforward exercises. The grammar sections often also include interesting points about Chinese culture, especially in the PRC (circa 1980). Beginning with lesson 3, there are sketches which are more extended dialogues. The presentations, dialogues, and sketches are all accompanied by full English translations. The volume ends with a page of abbreviations and an index to the complete vocabulary, both indicating the lessons in which a given item first appeared.

This is a model language text. Unlike most other introductory texts on the market, it makes Mandarin seem to be relatively nonexotic and capable of study by normal human beings. I find this a salutary approach to the national language of the world's most populous country.

LI Sijing. *Hanyu "er" [ ㄝ ] Yin Shih Yanjiu [Studies on the History of the "er" { ㄝ } Sound in Sinitic]*. Peking: Commercial, 1986. 3 + 7 + 152 pages.

Of all the phonological features of modern Pekingese and some other northern Mandarin dialects, undoubtedly the most distinctive is the so-called *erhuayin* ("suffixation of nonsyllabic r"). Here is an entire monograph that attempts to determine its origins. To do so, the author must first establish the sources for syllabic *er*, since it is generally believed that the nonsyllabic suffixed *r* derives from it. One might think that a monograph would be sufficient to make a definitive statement on such a severely circumscribed subject. Unfortunately, although the author has assembled a mass of valuable data, a number of lingering uncertainties persist. We shall examine these shortly.

Li claims that his/her research has established the following points:

1. In the evolution of the series of sounds related to *er* from the medieval period up to now, (s)he posits the existence of an intermediate [ʁ] value instead of a direct jump to [ㄝ].
2. The [ㄝ] sound initially develops during the early Ming period.
3. The suffixation of nonsyllabic *r* began during the mid-Ming period and became

firmly established during the late Ming.

4. The suffixation of nonsyllabic *r* that is so characteristic of certain northern Sinitic varieties of speech was formed from four major sources -- *er*, *ri*, *li*, and *liao*. The convergence of *er*, *ri*, *li*, and *liao* in nonsyllabic suffixed *r* is not a modern phenomenon but has historical roots.

In addition, Li maintains that (s)he has demonstrated the correctness of the following arguments concerning the [ ɚ ] and suffixed nonsyllabic *r* of Modern Standard Mandarin (MSM):

I. The *er* series of MSM is actually diphthongal [ əɹ ] [ aɹ ], not monophthongal [ ɚ ] which is conventionally used to represent these sounds and can only be considered as a sort of code that stands for the other two paired symbols.

II. The secret of the phonological changes that led to suffixed nonsyllabic *r* has to do with the combination of the vowels of the root morpheme and of *er* which actually has the sound [ əɹ ]. It is not due simply to "retroflexion."

III. The fixed nonsyllabic *r* of MSM, viewed in terms of its history, has evolved from the simple to the complex, not the other way around.

IV. The phonemic forms of MSM suffixed nonsyllabic *r* may be indicated thus:

$$\{ \text{ɚ} \} = \begin{array}{l} /əɹ/ \\ /aɹ/ \\ /əʳ/ \\ /aʳ/ \\ /uʳ/ \end{array}$$

Historical linguists and specialists on the phonology of Northern Mandarin dialects will continue to dispute all eight of the above items. One of the main conceptual reasons for debate is that Li confuses the evolution of the written manifestation of these sound changes in tetragraphs (a secondary matter) with the actual phonological evolution of speech patterns (of primary concern). The distortions this leads to are particularly evident in 4, II, and IV above, but it colors all of his/her analysis. This is a serious flaw that is endemic to Sinitic historical phonology in general and that will only be overcome by paying more attention to pure sound values and less to the peculiarities of the Chinese writing system.

There is, however, another entire realm of questions that I believe need to be raised regarding the origins of *er* and suffixed nonsyllabic *r*. Namely, were these remarkable phonological changes in northern Mandarin entirely self-generated, as Li and other investigators assume? Or were there external stimuli involved?

Aside from the methodological defects of Li's analysis, there is also the simple matter of the severely limited data. Because the evolution of *er* and the suffixation of nonsyllabic *r* occurred in the realm of vernacular speech, whereas the overwhelming bulk of texts recorded in tetragraphs represent the dead (in the sense that it was neither sayable nor listenable) classical language, the written record of these linguistic phenomena is sporadic at best. Li him/herself implicitly recognizes this problem (p. 6) and consequently admits that his/her book is by no means the last word on the subject.

While much remains to be said on the question of *er* and suffixed nonsyllabic *r* in Sinitic languages, Li's treatment is impressive for its thoroughness and care. (S)He appropriately begins with a discussion of earlier views on these issues. (S)He agrees with the consensus of his/her predecessors that the *er* series of sounds entered Sinitic after the Sui and T'ang periods (this may be

true of Middle Chinese, but recent research on Old Chinese reveals the probable existence of *r* sounds in Sinitic at a much earlier stage). On the other hand, (s)he questions whether it has been proven that [ɛ] already existed during the Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan period. Consequently, Li takes as his/her main task the accumulation of additional relevant materials so as to determine more precisely the phonological value of ㄨ (MSM *er*) during that period.

This (s)he does in the second chapter. Here Li introduces valuable information drawn from a variety of interesting sources: collections of folksongs, banner brother books (*zidishu*), and other oral and performing arts. These are mostly from the Qing period, but are relevant nonetheless for extrapolating useful data. (S)He also conscientiously refers to genres such as the Jin medley (*zhugongdiao*) and Yuan drama (Yuan *zaju*) that date to the period when the *er* series of sounds was presumably arising.

In the third chapter, Li focuses on the Ming period as that in which (s)he believes [ɛ] finally emerged, with its modern value. Aside from the vernacular arias (*qu*) to which (s)he alludes (which might have been supplemented by reference to the recently discovered popular prosimetric narratives known as *cihua*), Li also makes good use of multilingual glossaries.

Chapter 4 presents what Li maintains is the earliest clear record of suffixed nonsyllabic *r* in Sinitic. This is the *Xiru Ermu Zi [Aid for the Eyes and Ears of Western Literati]* of Nicolas Trigault (1577-1628). It is significant that the first unambiguous evidence for the existence of suffixed nonsyllabic *r* comes from an alphabetic transcription. Nor is it an accident that the most reliable testimony for the pronunciation of Northwest Sinitic (Gansu Corridor) during the Tang period comes from Tibetan, Khotanese, and Sogdian transcriptions (see Takata Tokio's excellent study entitled *Tonkō shiryō ni yoru Chūgokugo shi no kenkyū: kyū jū seiki no Kasei hōgen [A Historical Study of the Chinese Language Based on Dunhuang Materials: The Hexi Dialect of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries]* {English title as given on p. 459 of the book}), Tōyōgaku sōsho [Oriental Studies Library], 33 (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1988).

Chapter 5 concentrates on the conditions for the existence of suffixed nonsyllabic *r* as evidenced by a large number of expressions in the celebrated pornographic novel, *Jin Ping Mei [Gold Vase Plum]* that end with tetragraph for *er*. Here and elsewhere in the latter part of his/her book Li takes extensive exception to the suggestions of Y. R. Chao. His/her chief complaint seems to be that Chao views the emergence of suffixed nonsyllabic *r* as a suprasegmental quality whereas (s)he stresses, in an almost chemical fashion, that the nature of suffixed nonsyllabic *r* is due to the specific properties of the elements entering into the combinations. Here again, I believe that Li allows the morphological shape of Sinitic words as conveyed in tetragraphic syllabic writing to interfere with a pure phonological analysis.

Citing examples of presumably syllabic suffixed *er* from Yuan drama, the sixth chapter asserts that the Yuan period had a linguistic environment which fostered the development of suffixed nonsyllabic *r*, but that the latter itself did not appear (here *Shuihu Zhuan [Water Margins]* is cited as negative evidence) until the late Ming when conditions for its development were even more favorable, as witness *Xiyou Ji [Journey to the West]*.

Chapter 7 elaborates the four major sources of suffixed nonsyllabic *r* enumerated in point 4 near the beginning of this review. Chapter 8 attempts to determine the actual phonetic value of the *r* series in MSM and the morphophonemics of the *er* suffix. There is an exceedingly convoluted explication of the supposed distinctions among the "old-fashioned" way of pronouncing words with suffixed nonsyllabic *r* in comparison with the "semi-old-fashioned" and the "newfangled" ways of doing so.

One of the most important parts of the book is the appendix which reprints Tang Yu's article from the *Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Lishi Yuyan Yanjiusuo Jikan (Bulletin of the National Research Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica)*, 2.4 (1930[32]), 457-467 entitled "'Er' [ɛ] yin de yanbian (The Development of the Sound *erh* [ɛ])." While Tang himself does not make the claim, the massive evidence which he cites from non-Sinitic languages during the period from the Jian, Liao, and Song through the Yuan, Ming, and Qing when the *er* suffix was developing and maturing could be interpreted as indicating that it may have been stimulated by contact with

Uighurs, Khitans, Tanguts, Jürchens, Mongols, Manchus, and other non-Sinitic peoples who exercised great influence (and, at times, complete sovereignty) over North China. This is a possibility that fits well with Mantaro Hashimoto's hypothesis of altaicization which remains extremely stimulating but virtually untested.

Although this is a small book on a very small subject, the consequences are enormous. It is obvious from the attention I have paid to it that, while I respect Li Sijing's work, I disagree with many of his/her premises and conclusions. The basic conceptualization of the problem adopted by him/her altogether ignores sociolinguistic factors which, in the final analysis, are probably the most vital ones for explaining sound shifts of the sort that resulted in the distinctive suffixed nonsyllabic *r* of many northern Sinitic topolects.

Maurice Coyaud. *Les langues dans le monde chinois*. Paris: Pour l'Analyse du Folklore, 1987. 208 pages.

This volume is a handy supplement to the more carefully prepared and presented *The Languages of China* by S. Robert Ramsey (reviewed by William Hannas in the eighth issue of this journal). One gets the impression that the author was in great haste to get something down on paper about each of the recognized languages and scripts of China. Several sections have been previously published elsewhere and pasted into the text as is without revision or resetting. Some portions consist of summaries or extracts, not always fully identified, by other authors. The result is a jumbled format, an incredible mishmash of typefaces, and highly inconsistent treatment of the various languages covered.

Still and all, Coyaud has made a lot of useful information available within the covers of this book. What is more, his linguistic principles are generally sound, a refreshing departure from the run of the mill for those who deal with the languages (Sinitic and otherwise) of China. Judging from his wide-ranging interests in and publications on East Asia (festivals of Japan, Haiku; street cries of Japan and Vietnam; marvellous tales from China and the Philippines; Kanak and Japanese tales; stories, riddles, and proverbs of Japan; ambiguity in Japanese writing; popular stories of Korea; erotic tales and legends of Korea; initiation in Korea (written and spoken); Korean poetry; Korean grammar; Yuan drama; Ming fiction; etc.). Perhaps only someone whose mind is as voracious as Coyaud's can avoid being trapped by the Sinocentric vortex which so often causes serious distortions when China scholars deign (or dare) to touch upon "minority" (formerly "barbarian") matters.

Coyaud's discussion of Sinitic languages is astonishingly straightforward and accurate:

Le chinois actuel comporte huit langues, dont le *guóyǔ* (<<langue nationale>>) que les linguistes nomment le mandarin. Parlé par 387 M. (M. signifie millions) de Chinois, le mandarin comprend lui-même plusieurs dialectes, entre lesquels l'intercompréhension est faible.

Seldom have I seen such a sensible observation about Sinitic languages expressed in so few words.

Because the aspects of the languages discussed in the book vary so greatly, it is difficult to give an idea of the types of information it includes and to assess the overall quality of the coverage. Perhaps the best approach is simply to run through the book, pointing out several salient features along the way.

Chapter 1 consists of a single paragraph dealing with the complicated subject of linguistic families in East Asia. Chapter 2 introduces briefly the traditional and modern scripts of China, including Chinese tetragraphs (with an odd grouping of the semantic classifiers into seven categories and an idiosyncratic discussion of gestures and the early forms of the tetragraphs), Tangut, Naxi, and Moso (also used as illustrations throughout the text), Lolo (Yi), Geba, Zhuang, Jürchen, Mongol, and Dai. Coyaud's explanations, while short, are full of fascinating details

about how the various scripts function. Several of these scripts are represented by sample passages with transcriptions and word-for-word translations. Coyaud pays particular attention to the multiplicity of writing systems in China (including numerous romanized scripts created within the last century) and does yeoman service to publicize them in the face of systematic attempts by the authorities, especially during the Cultural Revolution, to phase out all but the Chinese tetragraphs.

Chapter 3 begins with a list of the linguistic families represented in China and then proceeds to present them in varying degrees of fullness. Only the phonology of Hakka is described with any degree of completeness. Cantonese tones are discussed and a few phrases and sentences (with unique tetragraphs) are given. Shanghainese tones and phonology are outlined. Paiwan is offered as an example of an Austronesian language and is granted quite elaborate description. As examples of Altaic languages, the Chahar and Xalx dialects of Mongolian are shown in the scripts that are respectively derived from Old Uighur and from Cyrillic. One of the saddest sections of the book has to do with the only remaining speakers of Manchu which less than a century ago was the language of a people who ruled over all of China. In 1964, there were still a few thousand individuals, all over age 45, who could speak Manchu. By 1982, there were only a handful left and they were all over 75. In spite of the fact that the Chinese government officially declares that there are over 4,000,000 Manchus, their language will probably be extinct within a decade. Coyaud's description of the surviving Manchu speech of Aihui district is one of his fuller treatments, covering phonology, relations with other Tungusic languages, and morphology (with a sizable number of sample sentences). Manchu is followed by another Tungusic language, Sibo, which is spoken in Sinkiang (by the descendants of an isolated garrison), Liaoning, Kirin, and Heilungkiang by about 50,000 speakers, and the Evenk who live in Heilunkiang and Inner Mongolia with a population of about 20,000. There follow, out of order, very cursory treatments of Bao'an, Yugur, and Tchagaan, all of which are Mongolian languages, and then Hezhen (Nanai) which is a Tungusic language with only a couple of thousand speakers. After that comes Uighur with its six million speakers, second only to Zhuang with its 13,000,000.

Coyaud then turns to the Tibeto-Burman family and chooses for description Lhopa, Sani, Gyarung, Kachin, Tsaiwa, the Mawo and T'ao-p'ing dialects of Ch'iang, Pitsikha, Lisu, Minjia, and Drung. Among Tai languages, we have the Zhuang (mentioned just above), Puhlyu, Mulam, Buyi, Kam, Maonan, Sui, Li, and Dai. The poorly classified Miao-Yao family is represented by short phonological descriptions (with sample vocabulary items) of Mien, Punu, Lakkyia, and She. Miao is accorded a long story with interlinear word-for-word rendering, a free translation, and notes. Among Austroasiatics, we meet the Gin and the Blang. The Wa should probably be classified as Mon-Khmer. The Klau are as yet unaffiliated with any linguistic family. Of Indo-European languages in China, Coyaud finds it necessary to describe only Tajik briefly.

The last quarter of the book is filled with a hodgepodge of short, synthetic chapters that are very hard to understand in the context of the book as a whole. Coyaud's "Notes de typologie grammaticale (langues d'Asie orientale)" skips from Thai to Modern Greek, from Tagalog to Mongolian, from Ainu to Archaic Egyptian. This paper was obviously still growing when he decided to insert it in this book. The paper on notation of tones in Zhuang, Thai, Tibetan, Burmese, and Korean is closer to home, but ends up nowhere except to follow the lead of politics which, as I have tried to show in other reviews and articles, is usually a linguistically bad choice. The paper on phonemes and graphemes in Thai, Burmese, and Tibetan seems more finished than the rest but, like the others it too seems to have been tossed in from a file of miscellaneous writings that the author despaired of ever publishing separately in finished form. The last paper on the syllable in Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean is apparently the most substantive of the lot, but it aim is far beyond my powers of comprehension.

The most serious drawback of the main part of this book (we shall overlook the idiosyncratic last quarter) is that it utilizes almost exclusively materials written in Modern Standard Mandarin, a problem that Coyaud himself admits. Since the Chinese often call their subject peoples by names other than those they call themselves (e.g. Dongxiang ["Eastern Village"] instead of Santa) and syllabically distort place names and other terms from their languages, this can be extremely

disconcerting when one is striving for ethnographic and linguistic exactitude. Sadly, since China was closed to much of the world for the three decades from 1950 to 1980 and there are now lamentable signs that it is once more turning in upon itself, the chances for other scholars to do fieldwork on the lesser known languages of China has been severely limited. At least a book like Coyaud's lets us know they are out there. Let us hope that they survive long enough for us to get a closer look at them in the not-too-distant future.

Patricia Herbert and Anthony Milner, eds. *South-East Asia: Languages and Literatures; A Select Guide*. South-East Asia Library Group. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989; published in Europe by Kiscadale (Whiting Bay, Arran, Scotland). x + 182 pages.

For those who are not specialists on South-East Asia but need a reliable place to turn for basic information, this is the handiest resource available. A collaborative effort by 28 British, Dutch, French, and Australian scholars, it has separate chapters on Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Overseas Chinese.

"Within each chapter of the *Guide*, material is arranged in this order: historical [and geographical] introduction; dating systems; languages and scripts; manuscripts; printing and the development of the press; literature (including legal literature). Short references are given in the text and a bibliography provided at the end of each country section." (from the preface, p. vii)

As might be expected, Chinese immigrants are mentioned in nearly every chapter. Because of their importance throughout the region, they also have their own chapter as well.

Andrew Large. *The Artificial Language Movement*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell in association with André Deutsch, 1985; paperback 1987. x + 239 pages.

Among my childhood fantasies was a "universal calculus" of concepts, thoughts, ideas, objects, creatures, qualities, actions, moods, and everything else in the world that mankind might conceivably speak of. Each of these discrete categories would be represented by a unique graph. The symbols, in turn, could be decomposed in what I fancied would be a strictly logical fashion. All of the graphs for flowers, for example, would have a component in common; all the graphs for annuals would have an element that distinguished them from perennials; and so forth. A sublime euphoria would sweep over me whenever I contemplated the grandness and nobility of this scheme for a script that could be used by all the languages of the world. When I learned that Leibnitz had contemplated a similar universal script three centuries earlier (apparently Francis Bacon had entertained similar fancies), I felt a deep sense of kinship with him. Although he had not succeeded in making this wonderfully humanitarian script a reality, I would carry on his work and relieve mankind of the scourge of the mutual inability to communicate. Still more miraculous, each component ("grapheme," as I conceived it) of the script would be associated with a pronounceable phoneme so that the script would also have the potential of becoming the common spoken language for the whole world.

Several times, I actually sat down and began to build this universal calculus. I devoted weeks to filling up notebooks with the design for my script and even jotted down hundreds of classifiers, sub-classifiers, and sub-sub-classifiers. But I always failed and failed resoundingly. My well-motivated and utterly earnest experiments convinced me beyond any doubt whatsoever of the impossibility of a script based solely on semantemes and, further, of the unworkability of all efforts to create an artificial language. The reasons, which I was not bright enough to see before I did the laboratory work, are quite simple.

In the first place, real language consists of more than just ideas, objects, concepts, actions, and so on. Real language also has tense, mood, number, degree, and other grammatical properties

that are extremely subtle and enormously varied. These less tangible aspects of language are also very numerous; to specify each of them in a semantically or logographically based script would make for impracticably large and complicated graphs. Secondly, the phenomena human beings encounter are infinitely varied and constantly shifting. There is no means for us to predict or prescribe what new phenomena we may have to cope with (which automatically includes speaking and writing about them) at any given moment. Third, human cognition and mentation are inexhaustibly nuanced and everlastingly transformative. Hence, we cannot decide ahead of time upon an eternally adequate script or artificial language. So complex is natural language, in fact, that only its **principles** are reducible to rules (grammar, phonology, morphology, syntax, etc.); its **details** can never be pinned down except by recording natural language itself. In other words, the only way to write down natural language is with a phonetic script -- all other kinds of scripts (mathematical, semantic, symbolic, etc.) portray something less than the full range of human language.

All of these factors (the endlessly evolving quality of natural language, its unlimited complexity which is linked to the minutiae of the real world, etc.) also account for the cumbersomeness of the Chinese script. Although it is only partially semantically based, it is this feature of the script which has caused it to proliferate such a vast number of tetragraphs (60,000 and growing rapidly). Each new chemical element that is discovered requires the invention of a new tetragraph. Individuals create new tetragraphs for their names which they feel express their personalities better than all existing ones. Speakers of non-standard topolects such as Cantonese have to devise tetragraphs for words in their languages that are not represented in the nationally accepted written language. Needless to say, each new tetragraph that comes into the script is a bane for typographers, students, and teachers alike. It is essential to observe that the emergence of a new graph in a semantically based or partially semantically based script is an entirely different matter than the insertion of a new word in a language that uses a phonetic alphabet. Alphabets have a severely limited number of letters that can be rearranged in a stupendously huge number of different ways. For English, theoretically that would be on the order of  $26^{26}$  (although certain letter combinations do not normally occur in a given language) which is such an enormous figure that my poor little calculator cannot compute it.  $26^4$  is 456,976, about the size of the current English vocabulary (the largest for any language), so the potential for expanding our vocabulary **without increasing the letters of the alphabet** is tremendous.

There is a ceaseless struggle that has been going on since the beginning of the Chinese script between regressive forces which strive to maintain high degrees of semanticity and progressive forces which continuously push the script towards more and more phoneticity. (Here I use the adjective "regressive" and "progressive" not as value-laden judgments but merely to indicate the directions of the two opposing trends.)

It is no accident that Leibnitz and I were both attracted to the Chinese script as a source of inspiration for our efforts to devise a universal calculus. Nor is it a coincidence that we were both ultimately disappointed by the Chinese script as a malleable device for representing all human languages. As it turns out, the imposing tetragraphs are much less tractable than the humble alphabet. Instead of serving the speaker as an easy means for putting down on a flat surface the words that he utters, the tetragraphs become an esthetically pleasing end in themselves that require constant attention to preserve mastery as well as the adjustment of natural language to the comparatively rigid dictates of an inflexible set of elaborate graphic shapes.

Andrew Large has written a fascinating account of the history of the dreamers and schemers who have sought to provide mankind with a universal language since the early seventeenth century. Most individuals who are concerned with the welfare of the species and the health of the planet would readily agree that a universal language would be a good thing. Unfortunately, nationalism gets in the way. The majority of people are not quite big-minded enough to accept any natural language (unless it is their own) as the desired universal tongue. Consequently, generations of well-meaning idealists have attempted to put together an artificial universal language that would obviate national prejudices. Aside from all the theoretical reasons cited above in this review, such a

language is unworkable because it is founded upon ingenuous premises. Virtually all of the artificial languages which aspire to speakability (e.g. Esperanto, Ido, Novial, Occidental, Latino, Volapük, Interlingua -- but not languages like Timerio [1-80-17 = "I love you"] and ISOTYPE [鞋 = "shoe factory"] which can only be written) are thinly disguised amalgams of elements from various Indo-European tongues, especially from the Romance family, without the integrity and spontaneity of the living languages themselves. The artificial language crowd subconsciously admits the necessity of retaining the systematic etymological structure of real language that was arrived at by millions of speakers over thousands of years. To tamper with that delicate edifice by jumbling together Altaic, Sinitic, Semitic, and other roots would lead to sheer chaos. At the same time, no one seems to be brave or arrogant enough to start wholly from scratch to produce a pronounceable artificial language that has no ties to any existing languages.

Esperanto, the most popular artificial language today, is fundamentally watered-down Romance. I can understand 90% of Esperanto because I know Latin, French, Italian, and a bit of Portuguese and Spanish. Since it has never been a truly living language (i.e., it has no native speakers and no genuine speech community who use it to transact daily business), however, it has to resort to all sorts of odd circumlocutions to express simple ideas. Esperanto is particularly weak in keeping abreast of international scientific terminology.

I fail to see the point of going to all the trouble -- noble though the impulse may be -- of creating an artificial language that is bound to be deficient and that few will be induced to learn. It would appear that, to the extent that an international language is necessary, it is inexorably chosen from among the natural languages. Witness Latin during the Middle Ages in Europe, Sogdian and then Persian in medieval Central Asia, French in the nineteenth century (spoken even in the households of many Russian nobles), and English during the twentieth century. There can be no question but that English has already assumed the role of a world language. When a large medical conference was held in Japan recently, participants from dozens of countries used English as their common tongue. Airplane pilots speak to control towers around the globe in English. Similarly, most computer programs are based on English. The astonishing spread of English and its wide adoption as an auxiliary language for international communication in virtually every country is documented in Braj B. Kachru, ed., *The Other Tongue: English across Cultures* (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1982). Particularly interesting is the eighth chapter on "Chinese Varieties of English" by Chin-Chuan Cheng.

The vast impact of English on China today is ironic in light of the misconceptions about the Chinese script entertained by early advocates of a universal language. Even Matteo Ricci, who worked in China for nearly 30 years, was confused enough about the tetragraphs to assert that they could serve as a common script to people whose spoken vernaculars were unrelated. Not all early commentators were so enchanted by the exotic characters, however. José de Acosta, in his *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590), noted that the Chinese spent so much time memorizing the multitude of graphs that this prevented them from attaining "high knowledge" in either secular or religious realms of thought. John Wilkins, who considered Chinese in his prolonged efforts to design a philosophical language (1668), ultimately dismissed it because there were too many individual items to learn, the difficulty of pronunciation, and the absence of analogy "betwixt the shape of the Characters, and the things represented by them." (cited by Large, p. 13) It is revealing that, in the present global village, Chinese firms communicate with their overseas offices in English (see Huang Tianlin, *Zhongguowen, Zhongguohua: Qi Guoqu, Xianzai yu Weilai; Youdian ji Qi Gaige zhi Fangxiang [Chinese Script and Chinese Speech: Their Past, Present, and Future; Their Merits and Direction of Reform]* [Taipei: Huang Tianlin, 1987], p. 90).

The vital role of English worldwide is well described by George Steiner in *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1975, rpt. 1977), p. 468:

There is ample evidence that English is regarded by native speakers of other languages whether in Asia, Africa or Latin America, as easier to acquire than any

other second language. It is widely felt that some degree of competence can be achieved through mastery of fewer and simpler phonetic, lexical, and grammatical units than would be the case in North Chinese, Russian, Spanish, German, or French (the natural rivals to world status). Today, English is being taught as a necessary skill for modern existence not only throughout continental Europe, but in the Soviet Union and China. It is the second language of Japan, and of much of Africa and India. It is estimated that 88 per cent of scientific and technical literature is either published in English initially or translated into English shortly after its appearance in such languages as Russian, German, and French. The novelist, the playwright, whether his native tongue be Swedish, Dutch, Hebrew, Hungarian, or Italian, looks to English translation for his window on the world. Though figures are very uncertain, the community of English-speakers has been reckoned at 300 million, and is growing rapidly. But statistics, however dramatic, do not make the main point. In ways too intricate, too diverse for socio-linguistics to formulate precisely, English and American-English seem to embody for men and women throughout the world -- and particularly for the young -- the 'feel' of hope, of material advance, of scientific and empirical procedures. The entire world-image of mass consumption, of international exchange, of the popular arts, of generational conflict, of technocracy, is permeated by American-English and English citations and speech habits.

With English already fulfilling the need for an international language, the hopes for an artificial language that would be shared by all mankind are dimming daily. It is telling that, of all the world's languages, English is the most aggressively eclectic. In essence, English has become virtually a hybrid of borrowings from dozens of other tongues. Perhaps we are approaching the end of Babel from an entirely unexpected direction. Even so, the story of the idealistic search for an artificial language told by Large is both fascinating and instructive. The lessons to be learned from it should prove useful as we turn our attention to the solution of other major problems facing humanity.

Wilhelm von Humboldt. *On Language: The Diversity of Human Language-Structure and Its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind*. Tr. by Peter Heath. Texts in German Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. Originally published as the introduction to the author's *Über die Kawi-Sprache auf der Insel Java* (1836-1840) and also issued separately with the title *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts*. lxix + 296 pages.

Previously translated into English by George C. Buck and Frithjof A. Raven as *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development* (1971), this work ranks with Peter S. DuPonceau's *A Dissertation on the Nature and Character of the Chinese System of Writing* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1838) as one of the great nineteenth-century analyses of the Chinese script. Although von Humboldt discusses much else than Chinese, especially Sanskrit by way of contrast (he sees them as extremes between which all other languages fall), the effect is comparable. The special properties of Sinitic languages and script are elucidated in a comparative vein.

It is to be regretted that Hans Aarsleff's sixty-page introduction carps on von Humboldt's alleged ethnocentrism. Not only do this and other petty cavils detract from Peter Heath's excellent translation, they groundlessly belittle the true accomplishment of von Humboldt.

Aside from interesting (although not necessarily entirely correct in historical terms) speculations on the relationship between spoken and classical forms of Sinitic, von Humboldt's observations on grammar are extremely perceptive. Von Humboldt does make daring statements

such as the following: "It can doubtless be maintained, in general, that once the mind begins to ascend to *scientific thinking*, and such a tendency enters into the treatment of language, a pictographic script simply cannot survive for long." (p. 232) But these assertions are part of a much larger argument, namely the significance of grammatical categories for thought. This is obviously a highly sensitive issue in the current politico-intellectual climate, but in the 1830s it was still a legitimate subject of inquiry. Perhaps it will one day again be free of the stigma attached to it by contemporary social concerns. If that happens, von Humboldt's learned essay will certainly be a foundation for future discussions on the subject.

Vitaly Shevoroshkin, ed. *Reconstructing Languages and Cultures*. Abstracts and Materials from the First International Interdisciplinary Symposium on Language and Prehistory, Ann Arbor, 8-12 November, 1988. Bochum: Studienverlag Dr. Norbert Brockmeyer, 1989. 176 pages.

Jan Wind, et al., eds. *Studies in Language Origins*. Volume 1. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1989. xxii + 331 pages.

Neither of these books will become known to more than a handful of scholars. This is lamentable in light of the fact that they are both asking questions and proposing solutions that will probably not be taken seriously by mainstream linguists for at least half a century.

*Reconstructing Languages and Cultures* (RLC) affords a glimpse at the research being done on Nostratic (which spawned six daughter-languages [West: Afro-Asiatic, Indo-European (IE), Kartvelian; East: Uralic, Dravidian, Altaic {Turkic, Mongolian, Tungus, Korean, Japanese, and Eskaleutian}]), the mother-language presumably spoken by our ancestors about 14,000 years ago. This work was begun in the early sixties by several brilliant young Soviet scholars such as A. B. Dolgopol'skij and V. M. Illič-Svityč. Conventional historical linguists are aghast at the prospects of trying to reconstruct proto-proto-languages when they are still struggling with proto-languages such as Sinto-Tibetan and Afrasian (formerly called Semito-Hamitic). As a matter of fact, work on proto-proto-languages is proving beneficial for the reconstruction of proto-languages. One principle that has been shared by Nostratic scholars ever since Illič-Svityč has been distrust of internal reconstruction, upon which IE historical linguistics has relied so heavily, without any checks afforded by external comparison. This principle should be of particular use to scholars who wish to reconstruct proto-Sinitic, since the tetragraphs are notoriously unreliable indicators of sound values.

Recently, another proto-proto-language of the same time-depth as Nostratic, namely Sino-Caucasian, has been put forward by S. Starostin and S. Nikolaev. This newly delineated phylum includes North Caucasian, Sino-Tibetan, Yeniseian, and Na-Dene. Other phyla, such as Austric (Austronesian, Miao-Yao, Tai-Kadai, and Austro-Asiatic) and Amerind (most Amerindian languages except Na-Dene and Eskaleutian), have been identified but remain to be elaborated in detail. Starostin has shown that Nostratic and Sino-Caucasian possess an apparent genetic relationship, thus it is possible that deep reconstructionists may one day be in a position to attempt the identification of the earliest (proto-proto-proto-)roots of human language. To do so successfully, they recognize that they will have to distinguish borrowings from inherited words, elucidate prehistoric contacts among proto-languages and proto-proto-languages, and utilize data from archeology, genetics, mathematics, physiology, psychology, mythology, religion, philosophy, and other disciplines. In this endeavor, they will be coming close to asking about the origins of human language itself, and in this they will be joining the contributors of *Studies in Language Origins* (SLO).

Because they are dealing with the very beginnings of human language, the papers in SLO tend to be much more theoretical and experimental than those in RLC. The authors employ a wide variety of different approaches and strategies to pinpoint the conditions necessary for the emergence of human speech. Edwin G. Pulleyblank, who is one of the four editors and a well-known

Sinologist, emphasizes the unique advantages of the duality of patterning (distinctive phonemes arranged in certain sequences to form distinctive morphemes) that is inherent in spoken language. Pulleyblank finds this highly efficient means of communication to be present in all natural forms of human speech and representable in writing through phonetic alphabets. By contrast, American Sign Language (ASL) and the Chinese script lack such a rigorous, simple, and elegantly analyzable system, hence the difficulty of indexing them and of introducing an indefinite amount of new names, ideas, and concepts into them without creating an enormous burden on their users. The speaker of natural languages, on the other hand, experiences no such obstacles. For him, it is possible to devise endless new arrangements of the strictly limited phonemes and morphemes at his command and to record these easily by means of a phonetic script if he lives in a society that possesses one. In order to achieve some portion of the marvelous flexibility of natural speech, ASL and the Chinese script "borrow" from spoken language in the sense that they both have subsidiary devices for representing the sounds of the dominant spoken language of the societies in which they are embedded. For all of these reasons, Pulleyblank believes that speech evolved before gestures as a device for communication among individuals concerning the semi-autonomous world that they create in their heads and that is only partially related to the real world of experience. It is this ability to manipulate the mental world and discuss it with others through language that has enabled human beings to deal imaginatively with the experiential world and consequently to have an "overwhelming advantage over other species in terms of cultural, as opposed to biological, evolution." (p.64)

The origin of language is obviously an enormously complex subject, but the authors of the papers in this fascinating volume rise to the occasion by considering all manner of possible factors. Gordon Hewes discusses the Upper Palaeolithic expansion of supernaturalism, John Goudsblom focuses on the impact of the domestication of fire, Jan Wind argues that the evolution of the vocal tract was less important for the emergence of speech in hominids than was intracerebral reorganization, Elaine Morgan offers a persuasive case for an aquatic phase in hominid evolution that would have contributed to the physiological adaptations which allowed for the emergence of human speech, Bernard H. Bichakjian evinces skepticism over the positions of Derek Bickerton and Noam Chomsky that human cells possess genetic coding for the acquisition of linguistic structures, F. J. Irsigler studies the role of the Insula Reilii in the brain for vocalization and for concept-formation, Hal J. Daniel relates the ontogeny and phylogeny of bipedal locomotion and laterality to the vestibular system of the labyrinths (the three cristae ampullae of the semicircular canals and the utricular and saccular maculae [his terminology]) and their functions in human communicative behavior, André A. Dhondt *et al.*, contrast bird vocalizations with human speech. This does not exhaust the contents of the book.

Perhaps the best overview of the field of language origins is Éric de Grolier's long paper on "Glossogenesis in Endolinguistic and Exolinguistic Perspective: Palaeoanthropological Data" (pp. 73-138) which is equipped with an extensive bibliography. It is somewhat disappointing that, aside from de Grolier who alludes to it briefly, none of the authors of SLO so much as mentions Nostratic scholarship. On the other hand, Nostratic scholars themselves are not sufficiently aware of the progress that is being made outside of their own narrow circle. If some means could be devised to bring about greater cooperation among the various isolated groups who are studying the prehistory of languages, the problems they are all interested in could be solved much more rapidly. With the advent of computerized bibliographies and information networks, I am optimistic that proto-World will be successfully reconstructed within the next fifty to one hundred years.

#### Short Notices

A. Kondratov. *Sounds and Signs*. Translated from the Russian by George Yankovsky. Moscow: Mir, 1969. 286 pages.

A positively fascinating little book on semiotics, languages, codes, ciphers, numbers, the universal code of science, the Tower of Babel, machine translation, phonology, and space linguistics.

Jeremy Campbell. *Grammatical Man: Information, Entropy, Language, and Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982. 319 pages.

If you want to learn what thermodynamics, cybernetics, linguistics, the nirvana principle, Jainan logic, DNA, and a host of other interesting subjects have to do with each other, read this incredibly informative book. Although the volume is chock full of wonderfully useful material, I was most enlightened by Boltzmann's entropy equation ( $S = k \log W$ ) which has enabled me to understand why Classical Chinese is so terribly difficult to read -- it possesses extremely high ambiguity and low redundancy.

But this is not only a stimulating book, it is also a comforting one. I used to be frightened that, following the laws of chance, all the molecules in the world might one instant fly off in the same direction with cataclysmic consequences, although the probability of that happening in the next million years or so was admittedly small. I also was worried that all the molecules would inevitably cease moving after they ran out of energy and then the entire universe would collapse upon itself. Mercifully, as Campbell reassures us in his foreword, "Information theory shows that there are good reasons why the forces of antichance are as universal as the forces of chance, even though entropy has been presented as the overwhelmingly more powerful principle." (p. 12)

Note: The following item is not a review but is relevant to many of the reviews in this section.

#### Pitfalls of the Tetragraphic Script

In the *People's Daily [Renmin Ribao]* of Thursday, February 8, 1990 (overseas edition), p. 6, there was an article announcing a contest for the best new novel that was being sponsored by the Tena Guangbodiantai 特納廣播電台. This was shown to an individual whose identity shall remain undisclosed except to say that he/she holds an M.A. in classical Chinese literature from National Taiwan University and an M.A. in modern Chinese literature from the University of Washington. He/she has also taught Mandarin at Harvard University, Middlebury College Summer School of Chinese, Bryn Mawr College, Haverford College, Swarthmore College, the Oberlin Center at Tunghai University, the Lauder Institute at the Wharton School of Business, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Washington. This person, who is quite learned and capable in handling the formidable Chinese characters, rendered Tena Guangbodiantai as "Special Acceptance Broadcasting." What the *People's Daily* really meant to convey was the name "Turner Broadcasting."

There is a lesson here. China should immediately announce a system for transcribing foreign names and titles that is both accurate and unambiguous. The amount of confusion caused by the current conventions of the script is immeasurable and surely must be a major contributing cause to the difficulty China is having in her efforts to modernize. If Han chauvinists insist that only characters may be used, at least they should give more accurate phonological transcriptions. Surely Ternar 特那 would give a better approximation of "Turner" than does Tena. To transcribe Turner as Tena strikes me as bordering on gross stupidity, if not willful deception. But the Chinese people have to put up with such monstrosities in all of their dealings with the world. Hence we have Baojialiya (! -- "guarantee add profit inferior") for Bulgaria and Liezhidunshideng (! -- "arrayed branches generous scholars ascend") for Liechtenstein. Such transcriptions, which neither sound nor mean like what they are intended to represent, must wreak havoc upon Chinese minds, just as Tena Guangbodiantai does. Yet the newspapers, magazines, journals, books, and

airwaves of China are flooded with them.

For the sake of their country's future well-being and prosperity (how can a modern nation function with such rampant imprecision and cognitive dissonance embedded in their daily language at every level?), I would strongly urge the Chinese authorities to adopt a sane and sensible method for transcribing internationally recognized names and terms as soon as possible.

## Lexicography and Lexicology

MIN Jiayi, et al., comp. *Hanyu Xinci Cidian [A Dictionary of New Sinitic Terms]*. Cishu Yanjiu Congshu [Reference Books Research Series]. Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu, 1987. 4 + 8 + 269 + 13 pages.

It is astounding that, out of the 1,654 entries in this dictionary, no more than about a dozen are identified as borrowings from foreign languages. In an age of widespread international communication and commerce, this would seem to be virtually impossible unless a) China is still effectively isolated from the rest of the world, b) Modern Standard Mandarin (MSM) as written with tetragraphs is so inflexible that it resists borrowing, or c) the compilers of this dictionary and PRC language authorities generally have conspired to camouflage a natural linguistic phenomenon that occurs whenever people have contact with each other. Judging from a reading of this collection of supposedly new terms in MSM, it would appear that all three factors are operative to a greater or lesser degree.

Actually, the situation is even more appalling than the description given in the first paragraph. Of the small number of words identified as new borrowings in this dictionary, several are actually quite old: *bashi* ("bus"), *dishi* ("taxi"), and *hanbaobao* ("hamburger") have already been around for many decades. Others are of more recent vintage, but still do not qualify as new: *bailing gongren* ("white-collar worker"), *lanling gongren* ("blue-collar worker"), and *yaogunyue* ("rock and roll", wrongly equated with "swing music" by the compilers). A few probably could not have been kept out of the MSM vocabulary no matter how hard patriotic language planners tried, e.g., *heixiazi* ("black box" [aviation term]) and *aizibing* ("AIDS"), which is the only sensible alternative to *houtian mianyi nengli sangshi zonghe zheng*. Most of the remaining terms admitted as coming from abroad point to the social degeneracy of the West: *daigou* ("generation gap"), *disike* ("disco"), *xipishi* ("Hippies"), and *yapishi* ("Yuppies"). There is one extremely unusual new MSM term which I seriously doubt ever gained much currency, that is *baobo* (< Burmese *pau*<sup>255</sup> *pho*<sup>33</sup> ["consanguinean"]).

When we start to dig a little deeper, however, we begin to find that the language police (and the tetragraphic script) could not really keep out dreaded foreign words as effectively as they might have us and their *baobo* believe. There are hundreds of calques and neologisms in this dictionary that pretend to be thoroughly Sinitic but are transparently borrowings: *bandaoti* ("semiconductor"), *biaoyan* ("performance [on the job]" or "behavior"), *disanzhe* ("third person"), *luxiang* ("video recorder" = *luyingji* in Taiwan), *kongtiao* ("air conditioning" = *lengqi[ji]* in Taiwan), *pengpengche* ("bumper cars"), *kongzhilun* ("cybernetics"), *xitonglun* ("systems theory"), *xinxilun* ("information theory"), and so on. I suspect that, with proper research, as much as a third or more of the entire vocabulary current in the PRC could be traced to Russian, German, French, Japanese, English, and other non-Sinitic sources. A similar ratio would most likely obtain for new terms such as those recorded in this dictionary. As to why they are not recognized as such, it is due to a combination of nationalism, the disguising morphosyllabic nature of the script, and level of etymological scholarship.

Similar oddities exist for the purely Sinitic terms in this dictionary. It would seem that some which have been around for centuries were forgotten since the founding of the PRC and have had to be reintroduced to the people. *Laohu* ("tiger") is defined as *hu*. This is surpassingly strange,

because every Mandarin speaker I know refers to tigers as *laohu*, not *hu*. The ostensibly new connotation of "rapacious" for tigers, appropriately illustrated by a quotation from the *Selected Works* of Deng Xiaoping, was already used by Confucius over two and a half millennia ago: *ke zheng meng yu hu* ("a harsh government is fiercer than a tiger"). And have the Chinese people all forgotten the age-old story of the herdboyc and the weaving girl (*niulang zhinyu*) so that they have to be told why it is a suitable metaphor for a husband and wife who work in different parts of the country? An expression I learned long ago, *xiaoluobotou* ("little radish head"), is here being touted for what it has meant all along -- a small potato, as it were. The lessons learned about the infelicity of *banwen bu bai* ("a mix of classical and vernacular") styles half a century ago, regrettably, seem to have been forgotten altogether so that the idea has to be resurrected all over again as though this were a new phrase.

One gets the impression that, in many cases, chance expressions have become enshrined as "new terms" because they were gems of wisdom uttered by some "big potato." Hence, *liangtiao tui zoulu* ("walking on your own two legs"), also to be found in the *Selected Works* of the paramount leader, can now be used wherever one might have been tempted to say "stand on your own two feet."

A sizable proportion of the terms in this dictionary are highly ephemeral. They reflect a temporary campaign or movement and are not likely to become a permanently useful part of MSM vocabulary. *Chuanghui* ("create [i.e. earn] [foreign] exchange") is one such that I heard everywhere I turned from 1985-1987 but seems to have receded recently as China adopts a more truculent attitude toward those countries whence the foreign exchange used to flow. It is good to have glossaries such as this which record the usages of a given period, but I certainly would not recommend inclusion in general dictionaries of even a tenth of the words in it. The dictionary under review focuses on catchwords culled from newspapers and periodicals dating from 1980 to 1985. Thus its coverage ceases before the rise of a term I learned only in May of 1989, namely *guandao* ("official profiteering"). Even though most people did not know exactly what it meant, *guandao* was on everybody's lips until June 4, 1989 but, like a flash in the pan, has barely been heard of since.

In general, many of the lexicographical principles adhered to by this dictionary deserve commendation. The entries, arranged alphabetically by head tetragraphs, give part of speech, definition, connotations, and sample occurrences with precise citations including publisher, date, and page number. The main body is preceded by an alphabetical index of head tetragraphs and followed by an index of terms according to the total stroke count (subdivided by shape of initial stroke) of head tetragraphs.

LYU Caizhen et al., comp. *Xiandai Hanyu Nanci Cidian [A Dictionary of Difficult Terms in Modern Sinitic]*. Peking: Yanbian Jiaoyu, 1985. 7 + 100 + 361 + 19 + 18 + 1 pages.

The terms in this dictionary are greater in number (about 6,200) and even more obscure than those in the preceding work. Whereas I was already familiar with about a third of the "new" terms (even though I am not a specialist on contemporary China), I was only able to recognize about an eighth of the "difficult" expressions. The reason I could comprehend that many is probably due to the fact that they go back to early vernacular traditions that I have studied before, were personal insults that I had endured, or were colloquialisms that I had stumbled upon by chance (e.g. *baofahu* ["nouveau riche, parvenu"], *bazijiao* ["pigeon-toed"], *dabizi* ["big nose" > "Westerner"], *lalilata* ["be unkempt," "all messed up"], *taiyangjing* ["sunglasses"]).

It is not without justification that the bulk of the terms in this dictionary are styled "difficult." The question, however, is what precisely makes them difficult. In the vast majority of cases, it is not because they are written with unusually rare tetragraphs. Most of them, indeed, are composed of tetragraphs that are among the 2,000 of the highest frequency, although a small portion include graphs that are extremely unusual (e.g. *baoluan* 包 保 ["guarantee"], *qitou* 鬼 頭 ["cheap"],

*xin* 新 ["to shine, reflect"], etc.). The real answer, which we shall give in the penultimate paragraph of our review, lies elsewhere.

Some of the entries are simply ornery tricks, such as "Xin Xi Lan" which does not mean "New Zealand," as we would have every reason to expect, but Sinkiang, Tibet, and Lanchou, an odd assortment of place names that supposedly stands for the frontier regions of China. I think the term is just a figment of someone's imagination and was probably never really spoken by anyone with the claimed meaning.

Unlike the dictionary of new terms reviewed above which drew its materials primarily from topical writing, this dictionary of difficult terms is based almost exclusively on fictional literature. At the back of the book, the compilers list 390 titles with their authors, publishers, and dates of publication. Most are from the late seventies and early eighties. There are also a few from the seventies and fewer still from the thirties.

Many of the expressions in this dictionary are colorful, to say the least. Here we find that old standard, *chi doufu* ("to eat bean curd"), which I have now been taught not only means to take liberties with a girl, but to joke and to eat a vegetarian meal as well. And, of course, our canine friends come in for the worst of it: *gou qiang shi* ("a dog scrambling for shit"), *goushengzi* ("dog leftovers"), and the like. Nor do our feline friends escape ridicule: *jiaochun* ("caterwaul"), *maoniao* ("tears [ $<$  cat piss]"), *maorniao* ("liquor [ $<$  cat piss]"), and so on.

It is obvious that this is not so much a dictionary of difficult expressions as it is a dictionary of slang. Such a collection of Chinese vulgarities, underworld jargon, thieves' cant, gangsters' talk, occupational argot, and everything short of outright obscenities I have never laid eyes upon in my life. Another reason that most of the words in this dictionary are unintelligible to those who only know Modern Standard Mandarin is that they are frequently from other Sinitic dialects and languages, e.g., *ndu* ("you [plural]"), *mulaolao* ("quite a few"), *ladu* ("to be at"), and so forth. What causes this dictionary to be so disappointing is that it makes almost no effort whatsoever to signify the background of the words that it has gathered. Consequently, one doubts the reliability of the definitions. If one does not know who uses a term of severely limited currency and in what circumstances, one cannot but hesitate to accept at face value the interpretation given it by the compilers. In contrast, a good dictionary of slang like those by the peerless Eric Partridge, Richard A. Spears' *Slang and Euphemism: A Dictionary of Oaths, Curses, Insults, Sexual Slang and Metaphor, Racial Slurs, Drug Talk, Homosexual Lingo, and Related Matters* (Middle Village, New York: Jonathan David, 1981), or J. S. Farmer and W. E. Henley's *Historical Dictionary of Slang: Three Hundred Years of Colloquial, Unorthodox and Vulgar English*, 2 vols. (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1987; originally published in 1890 as *Slang and Its Analogies*), tells us the period of usage, the social group that was the primary user, the meaning(s), synonyms, etymology, dialect, and so on for each item. In comparison, the lexicography of Chinese slang is still in its infancy.

The inadequacies of the work under review are also reflected in the sheer waste of 100 pages (! -- a sin in paper-deficient China) before the main body of the dictionary to give a listing of all the terms therein in the same order as the main body itself. The index of head tetragraphs at the back is almost equally useless because it is arranged according to a god-awful (to try out a bit of my own slang) system of 170 radicals. I simply refuse to memorize the hand radical as #46 instead of #64, the mouth radical as #48 instead of #30, and so on. To add to its other woes, China is experiencing a crisis in the making of indices. Why must Chinese scholars insist on making life difficult for themselves and everyone else?

Tom McArthur. *Worlds of Reference: Lexicography, learning and language from the clay tablet to the computer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; first paperback edition, 1988. x + 230 pages.

One of the most important problems, perhaps the single most important problem, facing any civilization (especially a technologically oriented civilization) is how to store, order, and retrieve

information. In a sense, ready access to information is the key to the solution of all social problems. War, pestilence, disasters, the enrichment of leisure, transportation, food, shelter, and other aspects of civilization can be better handled when precise information is easily available. Yet this is no simple matter as a trip into a modern library or office will convincingly demonstrate. Today, information science itself has become one of the most important and complex fields of human endeavor. Knowledge about knowledge is an increasingly sophisticated and vital aspect of our lives, but it has always been central to the development of civilization. Those societies which are capable of recording accurately, manipulating usefully, and transmitting efficiently current and past knowledge are more likely to survive and prosper than those which are unable to do so.

Noticing a variety of scripts (including Chinese) on its cover and nearly two dozen references to China in its index, I was led to believe that this book might have some enlightening things to say about the classification and organization of knowledge in China and how they compared with practices elsewhere. Unfortunately, I did not find what I was looking for. The author consistently (and erroneously) refers to Chinese ideograms ("idea signs") but seems to have no conception of how they work and what role they might have in the way information is handled in China. He repeatedly refers to the Chinese classics as models for the classification of knowledge, but his explanation of how they functioned is vague in the extreme. Small wonder, since his only source for the subject is Tien-yi Li's article on Chinese literature in the 15th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

McArthur gives great prominence to what he calls (p. 181) "a remarkable precedent" for "turning students on occasion into once-in-a-lifetime Sam Johnsons and Noah Websters." This is part of his extended description of a 400-page trilingual English / Spanish / Chinese *Trictionary* compiled by junior high school students from the Lower East Side of New York. Although McArthur tells us a great deal about the funding of the dictionary and the personalities involved in its compilation, we do not learn what its purpose was, how it was used, whether the Chinese in it was Mandarin or Cantonese, whether romanization was provided, how the Chinese entries were ordered, and so forth. Perhaps McArthur simply did not have sufficient information about the *Trictionary* (he appears to have relied solely on a *New Yorker* report). If such be the case, I cannot see the point of going on about it at such length.

Perhaps the most stimulating chapter in the book is the eleventh which describes the relationship between Latin and the Western European vernaculars from about 1400 onward. McArthur correctly associates the rise of the vernaculars with the growth of the mercantile and artisan classes. His argument that it was the Latinization or "classicization" of the vernaculars which ultimately led to their full acceptance, however, is open to question.

In the tenth chapter, which is a discussion of the thematic mode for arranging reference works vis-à-vis the alphabetic mode, McArthur acknowledges the success of the latter during the last thousand years, but fails to appreciate either the reasons for its success or the full psychological and ideological implications of its use. Throughout the chapter, his sentiments are clearly in favor of the practices of the Scholastics and he takes every opportunity to characterize alphabetization as "perverse, disjointed, and ultimately meaningless." The end of the chapter even hints that alphabetization might once again give way to thematic modes of presentation. So long as democratization is on the rise, it seems unlikely that will ever happen. When the people are empowered, they demand ready and efficient access to a wide range of information. This cannot be accomplished with elaborate schemes for the topical arrangement of universal knowledge. No one who consults Roget's *Thesaurus* does so by turning to the one thousand categories which are supposedly inclusive of all human thought. Instead, they turn to the alphabetical index at the back. Indeed, Roget's is fast losing ground to synonym finders and word finders, such as those of J. I. Rodale, which have all entries arranged in a single alphabetical order. Why? Because it is faster and easier. Having lived as a Sinologist for the last two decades of my life, I have tasted the bitter pain of having to find poems, words, ideas, names, places, things, and events in a vast sea of accumulated texts organized only by subject, genre, or chronology. It is a nightmare that I invite Tom McArthur to experience when he has nothing better to do with his time. Even the less elitist

and more practical of premodern Chinese scholars strove to arrange their reference works phonologically, as witness *Peiwen yunfu* and other lexicons that were ordered according to rhyme. While this is still insufferably cumbersome, it was perhaps the best they could do given the curse of a script that has 60,000+ individual elements.

McArthur's "envoi" (a fancy word for "conclusion") ends with a rather puerile plea for the establishment of a Museum of Reference and Information. Not that I am against such a worthy undertaking, mind you. It is just that the Disneyland atmosphere he advocates does not seem fitting for what aspires to be a major statement on the development of recording and reference over the last 5,000 years.

As one would expect from a Cambridge University Press title, this is a beautifully produced book. There are numerous photographs and charts, impressive quotations at the beginning of each chapter, an index that is inordinately thorough, and so forth. Yet, intellectually, *Worlds of Reference* is flat. If it is effervescent ideas you are after, better go back and peek at Robert Logan's *The Alphabet Effect* which I reviewed in the eighth issue of this journal.

### A Bouquet of Pekingese Lexicons

{I}

JIN Shoushen, comp. *Beijingshua Yuhui [Pekingese Vocabulary]*. Peking: Commercial, 1965, rev. ed.; first ed. 1961. 39 + 266 pages.

{II}

SONG Xiaocai and MA Xinhua, comp. *Beijingshua Ciyu Lishi [Pekingese Expressions with Examples and Explanations]*. N.p. (Peking?): Lingmu, 1982. 4 + 66 + 321 pages.

{III}

\_\_\_\_\_, comp. *Beijingshua Yuci Huishi [Pekingese Words and Phrases with Explanations]*. Peking: Peking Language Institute Press, 1987. 10 + 857 pages.

{IV}

FU Min and GAO Aijun, comp. *Beijingshua Ciyu (Dialectical Words and Phrases in Beijing)*. Peking: Peking University Press, 1986. 2 + 21 + 306 pages.

In the eighth issue of this journal (pp. 26-27), I favorably reviewed Chen Gang's *Beijing Fanyang Cidian [A Dictionary of Peking Colloquialisms]*. Zhou Yimin (*Fangyan*, 1 [1989], 75-77) has taken exception to some of Chen's attempts to identify the correct orthographic form, pronunciation, and etymology of terms from the spoken language. In the process, he has generally added to the confusion rather than clarifying it as, for example, when he disavows Chen's explanation of Pekingese *bashi* ("expert", "military arts [teacher]", "technique"), which has at least four different tetragraphic forms, with Manchu *baksi* ("teacher"). He cites what appears to be an occurrence of the same word in the thirty-second chapter of the Ming novel *Journey to the West* without considering its meaning there which must be something like "adult." In any event, such quibbles only serve to underscore the main point I made in reviewing Chen's dictionary, namely that the tetragraphic script, more often than not, is incapable of recording colloquial speech satisfactorily and unambiguously. If this is true of Pekingese, which has been officially proclaimed the foundation for Modern Standard Mandarin, one can well imagine the difficulties that arise when one attempts to write down other Mandarin topolects (*fangyan*) with tetragraphs, not to mention trying to cope with other Sinitic languages such as Cantonese or Taiwanese. Under these circumstances, one may justifiably bemoan the fact that the tetragraphs fail us.

The same conclusion is also richly borne out by the four dictionaries under review here. My graduate students from Peking have taught me some current expressions which they allege not to be

able to write with assurance in tetragraphs. Being a former basketball player, I was particularly intrigued by *gaimaor*, or just *gai* for short, which means "to block a shot." One might be tempted to select the tetragraphs meaning "put on a cap" for this expression, except that it originally seems to have signified "outstanding" or "excellent" and has acquired the idea of "block a shot" only in recent times. Another word my students from Peking use but do not know how to write is *sayaz[i]*, which they tell me means "to run (away) quickly." It is customarily transcribed with tetragraphs that taken individually seem to mean "to scatter ducks," but *sayazi* is actually a verb, e.g., *Ta jian ta laozi yi lai jiu sayazile* ("He ran away as soon as he saw his dad coming"). *Yazi* in this and several other distinctive Pekingese expressions means "foot," not "duck." The relationship between "foot" and "duck" here is not clear.

The preface to {I} was written by Lao She, the famous author of plays, novels, and short stories that have their setting in Peking. The first paragraph is important for the light it sheds on the encumbrances placed upon writers by the tetragraphic script:

I was born in Peking and lived there till I was 20 before I went away to make a living. As a result, whenever I write fiction and drama, it is hard for me to avoid using expressions from the Peking dialect that I have been accustomed to since childhood. When I use these expressions, however, it is by no means without difficulty. Some of them are quite pleasing to the ear, but they are only sounds without any graphs, so I don't know how to write them down. Even after pondering for a long time, all I can do in the end is abandon them which leaves me feeling strangely uncomfortable. Others originally were written with old graphs, but they now have a different pronunciation in the mouths of Pekingese. If you seek for graphs according to their sounds, it is invariably in vain. Still others are written with graphs that match their sounds, but when they are written down even I myself am not very clear about their meaning and derivation, which is rather depressing. It's true, I myself often can not explain why I use the graphs I do. How awkward! After all, some expressions in Pekingese have been borrowed from the languages of the Manchus, Mongols, Hui, and other minority nationalities. I don't have the time to do research work, so I have no choice but to speak the way others speak, being able to find neither the sources nor the explanations.

It is tremendously revealing that the best-known writer of literature about twentieth-century Peking would admit to being so constrained by the Chinese script. Such limitations would have vanished instantly, however, if he were to have adopted a phonetic script. The compiler of {I} gives many interesting examples of colorful expressions in Pekingese for which there are no appropriate tetragraphs and forthrightly speaks (p. 5) of "the superiority of Hanyu Pinyin [Romanized MSM]."

As befits dictionaries that deal with vernacular and colloquial Sinitic languages, all four of the works under review are arranged alphabetically. For this improvement, which represents a general trend in the compilation of reference materials in the PRC, we can be grateful. Unfortunately, they all employ a double sort order by head characters. {I} makes no effort whatsoever to indicate polysyllabic words and their boundaries, {III} is only slightly better in this respect, while {II} and {IV} are commendably cognizant of the need to mark off words with spaces between them.

In terms of accurate scholarship and philological expertise, none of the four dictionaries under review compare with that of Chen Gang which is, not incidentally, arranged in a single alphabetical sort and displays an excellent sense of grammar and word boundaries. Chen's dictionary is also the only dictionary of Pekingese known to me that makes a serious attempt to include words taken directly from speech. It is, furthermore, the only which pays any attention to such lexicographical niceties as part of speech, level (social, gender, field, etc.) and period of usage, etymology, variant orthographies and pronunciations, and so forth. In addition, Chen gives

succinct example sentences. In short, Chen's is by far the best dictionary of Pekingese to own if one can get one's hands on it. Nonetheless, each of the other four dictionaries has its own special characteristics, so it may be worthwhile to describe them briefly.

{I} makes an attempt to find early sources dating back to the Liao, Jin, and Yuan periods, but it does so inconsistently and mixes old citations with modern examples. Although it wastes over twenty pages on an index that duplicates the main order of the entries, {I} does offer a short appendix (pp. 12-16) on ways to specify time in Pekingese. It also seems to have made a particular effort to locate long and obscure expressions. {I} is relatively small (somewhat over a thousand entries), but it gives the impression of being more authentic for living speakers than the other three titles.

{II} (about 2,500 entries) provides sporadic citations from a very limited number of inadequately identified literary works. It wastes 66 pages on a virtually useless index that recapitulates the main order of the dictionary. Its vocabulary tends to be somewhat conventional and the definitions it provides are scanty.

{III} is by far the largest of the lot (over 5,000 entries) and is based primarily on literary sources. It is, in essence, a much expanded and revised version of {II}. It would appear that the authors were primarily stimulated to compile their book by the demands of foreign students studying in Peking who needed a reference tool that would permit them to look up words they were hearing in daily conversation but that were not included in dictionaries of Modern Standard Mandarin (MSM). Even though this is a big book, it is ultimately unsatisfactory as a dictionary of Pekingese because its sources are almost exclusively written texts that have been regularized in accordance with MSM to a great degree. A substantial proportion of the entries may no longer be reckoned as dialectal: *dabanr* ("make up"), *dacha* ("interrupt"), *hushuobadao* ("nonsense"), *hengshu* ("no matter what"), and the like.

{IV} is also fairly large (3,239 entries) and is based on literary sources. A few items come from the thirties and late seventies, but the vast majority date from the mid-fifties to early sixties and from the first half of the eighties. A table at the back of the book (pp. 301-304) lists the titles, publishers, and dates of the works referred to in abbreviated fashion in the dictionary. Although the compilers claim to have checked their work against spoken usage, their reprehensible editorial policy is revealed in all its infamy in the following sentences from their Afterword (p. 306):

Because our principle was to accept only expressions that we have seen in written texts, there are quite a lot of Pekingese expressions that are indeed used in daily speech which we had to omit because we have not yet collected relevant example sentences. Similarly, we have been forced to give up several definitions.

**It is almost unbelievable that the compilers of a dictionary that purports to record the usages of Peking colloquial speech would systematically exclude all of the many words and expressions that cannot be written with tetragraphs. As a guide to genuine Pekingese, their work is virtually useless. What the compilers have given us instead is a sanitized form of written MSM spiced up with a bit of bowdlerized Peking exoticisms. As compensation, they offer two indices of head characters, one according to the Pinyin order of the main body of the dictionary and the other by total stroke count (subdivided by the shapes of initial strokes) of simplified tetragraphs.**

It is a tragedy that the lexicographical standards for non-standard Sinitic languages, topolects, and dialects are still by and large so abysmally low. In many cases, such dictionaries are not even worth the paper on which they are printed for, not only do they fail to provide an accurate accounting of these forms of speech, they systematically distort them so as to make them conform to the dictates of the tetragraphic script. The latter is suitable in the first instance for Classical Chinese and secondarily for regularized, homogenized Mandarin (i.e. the official language of government that is detached from the life of the people by a wall of impenetrable and inflexible morphosyllabic graphs), but not for the vital forms of speech of the various regions of China which

are constantly changing and growing. The tetragraphs simply cannot keep up with the fertile minds and fecund mouths of human beings.

### A Bibliographical Trilogy

Paul Fu-mien Yang, comp. *Chinese Linguistics: A Selected and Classified Bibliography*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1974. xxix + 292 pages.

\_\_\_\_\_, comp. *Chinese Dialectology: A Selected and Classified Bibliography*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1981. xxxix + 189 pages.

\_\_\_\_\_, comp. *Chinese Lexicology and Lexicography: A Selected and Classified Bibliography*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1985. xlvii + 361 pages.

Together, these three volumes constitute the fullest bibliography for any subfield within Sinology. It would be wonderful if a comparable reference tool were available for Chinese literature. The author has gone to great lengths to make these bibliographies both easy to use and accurate. By way of example, I shall describe the first volume in some detail.

*Chinese Linguistics* is a model of intelligent organization. A glance at the "Table of Contents" gives an encapsulation of the elaborate and well-planned structure of the entire work. This bibliography is no mere alphabetical listing of a mass of entries. The major headings are as follows: "Bibliography and Collected Essays," "History of Chinese Linguistics," "Methodology of Chinese Linguistics," "General History of the Chinese Language," "Archaic Chinese," "Post-Archaic Chinese," "Ancient Chinese," "Medieval Chinese," "Ancient Mandarin," "Modern Chinese," "Chinese and Other Languages," and "Chinese Writing." Under each of these headings are carefully analyzed sub-headings and sub-sub-headings. Thus, if we wish to locate studies on the *fanqie* 反切 ("cut-and-splice") method for indicating the sounds of Chinese characters, we simply and swiftly turn to section 7.1.4.1 (entries numbered 1179 to 1198) of the bibliography.

The compiler's passion for thoroughness is evident throughout. The list of periodicals examined (pp. xvii-xxvii) reveals that he has combed resources from virtually every country in the world where Sinology is actively pursued. The Japanese and Chinese entries are given in romanization (Wade-Giles for MSM), English translation, and characters plus *kana*.

At the conclusion of the main body of entries may be found a series of useful indices: "List of Chinese, Japanese and Korean Publishers," "Romanized Index of Authors" with numerical keys to entries by them, "Character Index of Oriental Authors and Chinese Names for Western Authors" arranged by total stroke count, and an essay in Chinese (with English summary) by Chou Fa-kao dealing with general trends in Chinese linguistics during the twentieth century.

The dialectology and lexicology/lexicography volumes follow exactly the same format as the linguistics volume. In all three, many of the entries are so extensively described that they are close to being annotated.

Although the compiler is extremely generous (3,257 entries in the first volume, 2,275 in the second, and 4,165 in the third), these three bibliographies are by no means exhaustive for all areas relevant to the study of Sinitic languages. There is, for example, no coverage of language reform and only occasional mention of sociolinguistic aspects of language but none of sociolinguistics proper. Let us hope that, in future bibliographies by Paul Fu-mien Yang, these and other important subjects will receive the same careful treatment he has afforded such topics as the hPhags-pa script and similarly exotic topics in these volumes. Perhaps he could catch these loose ends in a supplementary volume that would also serve to update these three volumes which were originally begun in 1967. In the meantime, the work of students of Chinese languages has already been made much easier through the efforts of the compiler in the present set of bibliographies. This is an admirable work of scholarship, something that can only rarely be said of a reference tool. Paul

Yang's diligence in bringing together nearly 10,000 citations and organizing them in a logical fashion is nothing short of amazing.

(Note: In a phone conversation just before this issue of *SPP* went to press, Yang informed me that he has indeed prepared a bibliography of studies on Chinese script, script reform, and sociolinguistics and that this new volume will be published within a couple of years.)

### Orality and Literacy

Jack Goody. *The interface between the written and the oral*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987; 1988 rpt. xxi + 328 pages.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The logic of writing and the organization of society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986; 1988 rpt. xvii + 213 pages.

This pair of books by the Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge is, at best, poorly known to students of Chinese society. Because much of what Goody has to say in them is instructive and illuminating for Sinologists, it is a pleasure to be able to introduce them to the readers of *Sino-Platonic Papers*. The two volumes are part of a distinguished series of works by the author entitled *Studies in Literacy, Family, Culture and the State* which stretches back to 1968. Goody's list of publications actually begins much earlier, in 1954. While he has basically been a West Africanist throughout most of his career, the author has always had a theoretical and analytical bent that makes all of his works significant for students of other societies. During the latter part of his career, he has focused on increasingly larger issues and drawn on a broader geographical and temporal base, the culmination of his synthesizing efforts being the landmark volumes under review.

Goody is not the only important scholar who has been working on the question of literacy during the last few decades. Others include the classicist Eric A. Havelock, the humanistic psychologist Walter Ong, the sociolinguist Michael Stubbs, and the media specialist Robert Pattison. All of these men have made important contributions to our understanding of literacy. What sets Goody aside is that, being an anthropologist, his work is intimately tied to the real situation in the field. Thus, in spite of his ability to theorize, this makes it more concrete and immediate than many writings on this subject.

Because of the uniqueness of the morphosyllabic Chinese script in the modern world, the tremendous esteem for the written word in China -- even among the masses of complete illiterates -- the complicated pattern of languages and dialects, the huge role of oral literature in transmitting cultural values, the severe trauma China has been undergoing for the past century and a half as it attempts to modernize and democratize, and a host of other factors that might be listed, literacy ought to be one of the most important topics in Sinology. Unfortunately, there has only been one major study on the subject, Evelyn Sakakida Rawski's *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979). Consequently, her book has had an impact out of all proportion to its own original intention of studying a restricted range of materials during a specific time period.

Rawski herself was always careful to note that her findings indicated only "functional" skills for highly specialized tasks among the male populace. Nonetheless, the figures she gives of 30% to 45% of males having "basic literacy" (which might mean the ability to read only a few tetragraphs) have been quoted widely and frequently by subsequent investigators to show that premodern China had comparatively high levels of popular literacy. Before jumping to such conclusions, they should pay heed to Rawski's observation that knowledge of a limited number of tetragraphs from the nonalphabetic Chinese script would not permit an individual to read or write about subjects outside of his own extremely circumscribed area of expertise. Knowing 26

tetragraphs (approximately .04 of one percent of the total number and one percent of the amount necessary for general purposes) is not the same as knowing the 26 letters of the alphabet (100% of the total). My own study on "Language and Ideology in the Written Popularizations of the *Sacred Edict*" (in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985], pp. 325-359) demonstrated unmistakably that even written vernacular paraphrases of the emperor's Classical Chinese instructions had to be explained orally to the populace. This was a matter of enormous concern to officials and bureaucrats from the highest to the lowest levels of government, not in the sense of encouraging them to devise effective methods for spreading literacy, but rather in stimulating them to think of more efficient means to make oral presentations of the imperial teachings available on a regular basis in the various local dialects and languages.

Rawski did a great service by initiating literacy studies for China. Now we need a whole series of case studies for different periods and areas before moving on to general discussions about premodern Chinese literacy, the significance of the script, and so forth. Only then will we be able to draw useful comparative conclusions. I would also strongly suggest that we should thoroughly digest the works of Jack Goody before proceeding. In the following paragraphs, I will briefly describe some of the "goodies" one can expect to encounter in the books under review.

*Logic*, as the author states in his preface, "attempts to spell out some of the general differences between the social organization of societies without and with writing and the process of transition from one to the other." This in itself is an interesting proposition for China where certain segments of society have had a written tradition for approximately 3,200 years, while others (women, non-Sinitic groups, those speaking non-standard Sinitic languages such as Cantonese, Amoy, and so on) have for all purposes been without a script until the last century when missionaries decided to change the Chinese polity in fundamental respects. Goody's reflections on the place of sacred scripture within and across societies complement well the studies of Kristofer Schipper, John Lagerwey, Michel Strickmann, and others on Taoist ritual texts, but might enable them to discern broader implications of their work for China and elsewhere. Goody devotes a chapter to the role of economic activities in the origins of writing in the Ancient Near East. We might take a hint from this lead and devote more attention to the rise of the merchant class in China and its relation to the flourishing of vernacular fiction and drama. Having examined the importance of religion and economy for writing, Goody then looks at the next most obvious arena, that of the government apparatus. There is no question but that writing and the state have been closely intertwined throughout Chinese history, but the precise mechanisms of this relationship have yet to be studied in depth. The last major topic addressed in *Logic* is the connection between law and written codes, contracts, documents, etc. While judicial records have not occupied as vital a position in Chinese society as they have in many other places, it is instructive that many Han bamboo strips and Dunhuang documents, to mention only two types of primary materials, do deal with legal matters.

Whereas *Logic* concentrates on the effect of writing upon various facets of society, *Interface* looks at the complex interrelationships between writing and orality within society as a whole and the consequences this holds for communication. Here again, it is convenient to quote Goody's own aims as stated at the beginning of his preface:

This book deals with three aspects of the interface between the oral and the written which are often confused. There is the meeting of cultures with and without writing, historically and geographically. There is the interface of written and oral traditions in societies that employ writing to varying degrees in various contexts. And there is the interface between the use of writing and speech in the linguistic life of any individual.

*Interface* may be viewed as the culmination of Goody's ruminations on the interaction between the written and the oral that began with his celebrated article, jointly authored with Ian P. Watt, entitled "The Consequences of Literacy" that was published in *Comparative Studies in*

*Society and History*, 5 (1963), 304-345 (reprinted in Jack Goody, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968], pp. 27-84). As Goody sums up the impact of literacy upon culture in the preface to *Interface*, there are the following variations:

- 1 the nature of the script and its method of reproduction,
- 2 the numbers able to read and write at a specific level (for example, a signature),
- 3 whether individuals are learning to read and write their natural tongue, a related language, a different living language, a dead language or an invented language,
- 4 the width of use within the culture (e.g. whether or not that is restricted to religion),
- 5 the content of the written tradition.

Each of these topics has tremendous relevance for China. Likewise, Goody's concept of "standardized oral forms" as opposed to the oxymoronic "oral literature" offers great potential for the analysis of truly oral performances in China, whether rehearsed or not. The writing out of oral literature (< Latin *littera* ["letter"]), be it from dictation or from memorization, almost always entails a "constructed" performance quite unlike the spontaneity of genuine oral delivery.

*Interface* is a comprehensive treatment of the spoken / scripted nexus, beginning as it does with a lucid fact-filled discussion of the historical development of writing. Goody then turns to the impact of the development of writing systems upon culture in the ancient world. Although his main interest is on determining the significance of the alphabet for the evolution of Greek science, he also has time to toss off such penetrating asides as this: "The logographic [Chinese] script inhibited the development of a democratic literate culture...." (p. 64) Those who are still alarmed by the nonarrival of Mr. Science and Mr. Democracy today, seventy years after the May Fourth movement when they were brought to the fore of every reformer's consciousness, would do well to heed the momentous truth of Goody's candid statement.

The third chapter of *Interface* tests the "oral theory" of Homeric composition elaborated by Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord, which was based upon fieldwork done in Yugoslavia, by applying it to West African epics that come from genuinely oral (i.e., nonliterate) cultures. He finds that even Homeric verse could not help but have been influenced by its partially literate background. The fourth chapter attempts to prove that the Vedas themselves -- as we know them now -- are "texts" rather than "utterances" and that writing was instrumental in their composition. Sanskritists are sure to debate Goody on this point. There follow five chapters dealing with various aspects of written and oral cultures in West Africa. These include the impact of Islamic writing on oral cultures, the impact of European schooling, the recitation of the Bagre epic among the LoDagaa of northern Ghana, and the recently invented phonetic Vai script of Liberia. The final chapters, which deal with the sociological and psychological analysis of literacy, contain very insightful comments on Sinitic languages and script.

It is evident that *Logic* and *Interface* have much to offer the Sinologist who cares about the crucial roles of language and script in society. For those who wish to pursue these matters even further, both books include extensive and up-to-date bibliographies.

Deborah Tannen, ed. *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy*. Advances in Discourse Processes, 9. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex, 1982; second printing, 1984. xiii + 267 pages.

The thirteen chapters in this volume examine basic issues of discourse analysis from a broadly interdisciplinary perspective that includes research in anthropology, psychology, and literature, but above all linguistics (especially of the applied variety). The first chapter, by the editor, sets the stage for the others by developing "the notion of an oral / literate continuum, or, more precisely, a continuum of relative focus on interpersonal involvement vs. message content." (p. 15) Among the most novel features of this chapter, at least for this reader, are the conventions

employed by the author for transcribing actual discourse with all of its pauses, repetitions, stresses, changes of pitch, intonation, and volume, overlapping speech, and so forth. These conventions might be used by students of folk and popular literature to record oral performances more accurately.

There follow the three main parts of the book. The first (chapters 2-5) deals with differences in spoken and written language, the second (chapters 6-10) with common features of the two realms, while the third (chapters 11-13) explores the effects of changing oral and literate traditions in both human and linguistic terms.

Chapter 2, by Angela Hildyard and David R. Olson, reports the results of an experiment with third and fifth graders which show that listeners pay more attention to what is meant while readers attend more to the details of a narrative. Wallace L. Chafe, in chapter 3, demonstrates in very persuasive fashion that spoken and written language are dissimilar with regard to two sets of features. The first set is attributable to an opposition of fragmentation and integration, which Chafe suggests is a consequence of differences in the use of time in speaking and writing. The second set reflects an involvement versus detachment dichotomy which he attributes to the different relations of a speaker or writer to his / her audience. Chafe's article is full of interesting quantified observations, such as that speaking is faster than writing but slower than reading. His measurement of fragmentation (the stringing together of idea units with or without connectives) and integration (the packing of more information into an idea unit than the rapid pace of speech normally allows) raises the level of discussion on this subject to a new level of precision. The data he uses is based on samples of four styles of language produced by the same individuals:

- 1) informal spoken language, from dinnertable conversations,
- 2) formal spoken language, from lectures,
- 3) informal written language, from letters,
- 4) formal written language, from academic papers.

(p. 36)

Among the devices used by writers to achieve integration are nominalizations, participles, attributive adjectives, conjoined phrases, series, sequences of prepositional phrases, complement clauses, and relative clauses, all of which occur much more frequently in written than in spoken samples. Conversely, Chafe presents data which show that speakers interact with their audiences whereas writers are detached from them. This may seem like a truism that does not need to be demonstrated, but it is nice to have the differences between the two types of language spelled out in terms of such measurable factors as first person references, references to the speaker's or writer's own mental processes, the monitoring of information flow ("well," "I mean," "you know"), emphatic particles, fuzziness ("and so on," "sort of," "something like"), and direct quotes. Chafe closes his chapter with a defense of the term "oral literature" which seems to contain an internal contradiction. His defense is founded on the observation that the distinction between colloquial and ritual language among the Seneca (an Iroquois tribe) parallels the distinction between colloquial and written language. While I believe that the notion of "oral literature" is fatally flawed on etymological grounds, the similarity between stylized ritual language and written language certainly merits further investigation.

Chapter 4 is an investigation of written spoken style in Japanese narratives by Patricia M. Clancy. The initial two paragraphs state the issues she is involved with in such a lively form that I cannot resist quoting them here:

To an American attempting to master Japanese, one of the most difficult features of the language is the bewildering variety of speech styles which must be learned. Each style has its own lexical, morphological, syntactic, and intonational properties, and it often seems that every situation one encounters calls for a different style. The selection of a style is typically determined by the relative status, age, and sex of speaker and hearer.

Furthermore, men and women frequently speak differently, using not only distinctive intonation, but also characteristic grammatical and lexical forms. The combination of stylistic options appropriate to particular configurations of relative age, sex, and status in any speech context creates a multiplicity of speech styles. The situation is further complicated by the possibility of style shifting within a single context, or using stylistic features metaphorically to convey distance, sarcastically exaggerated respect, childishness, etc.

In Japanese, written and spoken language are also stylistically distinct. The differences between 'hanashikotoba' (speech) and 'kakikotoba' (writing) are, in fact, so great that native speakers are often shocked and dismayed when shown detailed verbatim transcripts of ordinary spoken Japanese. For example, one Japanese graduate student who saw the quite typical samples of adult speech used for the present paper initially believed that the speakers must have been children. Just as there is no single spoken style in Japanese, so there are many types of written styles besides the formal expository prose which tends to be regarded as the norm for writing. Yet even in more casual forms of writing, the differences between written and spoken language are striking, and often seem to be mandated by the medium of communication rather than any characteristics of the speaker, hearer, or topic. For example, the same speaker who will use plain verb forms in conversation to a particular friend may use polite forms when writing that friend a personal letter. Thus it is possible to analyze the effects of the communication medium, writing or speaking, upon the way in which a particular message is expressed linguistically.

(pp. 55-56)

Clancy's analysis of the differences between written and spoken Japanese is based upon a sample of 40 narratives, 20 written and 20 spoken, produced by young Japanese women in response to a seven-minute film that they were shown. Her discussion concentrates on verb morphology, particles, referents, word order, and linguistic integration. The author suggests that the extreme differences between spoken and written Japanese grow out of cognitive and social demands of speaking and writing in their respective contexts. To this I would add the extraordinarily complicated nature of the Japanese script (*kanji* with their variant borrowed Chinese and domesticated meanings and pronunciations, two types of *kana* that are used in unpredictable ways, an extremely high incidence of homophony allowable in written texts [check *shishi* in a typical dictionary] that speakers naturally avoid in order to remain intelligible to their auditors, etc.).

In chapter 5, Charles N. Li and Sandra A. Thompson appropriately refer to the "gulf" between spoken and written Chinese. They begin their discussion by pointing out that the Chinese writing system is unique among existing scripts in being semantically rather than phonologically grounded. The first half of the chapter consists of a no-nonsense description of a sample Classical Chinese text, the opening paragraph of Pu Songling's "Lao Shan Daoshi (The Taoist of Lao Mountain)." They properly question the common assumption that Classical Chinese (*wenyan*) is a close approximation of the spoken language of northern China around the third century B.I.E.:

**This assumption that a written language corresponds to its contemporary spoken form may seem so natural and sensible that it hardly needs any justification as a universal principle. Yet anyone who has had the opportunity to examine classical Chinese literature can attest to the extreme brevity and telegraphic nature of the written language, which borders on being cryptic. One wonders, then, to what extent such a written language is truly rooted in a spoken language.**

(p. 78, emphasis added)

Li and Thompson characterize "the extreme brevity and telegraphic nature" of the classical written

language as fraught with rampant zero anaphora (i.e. unstated subject), a scarcity of grammatical morphemes, and brevity of clauses. Along the way, they give vent to numerous insightful gems, such as that the discrepancy between Modern Standard Mandarin and Classical Chinese in regard to frequency of grammatical morphemes "is almost as impressive as that between modern English and modern Mandarin." (p. 80) Li and Thompson's statement of the manner in which Classical Chinese is actually read is the clearest I have ever encountered. They show unambiguously what an enormous burden is placed on the reader to fill in information that is habitually not made explicit by classical writers. After demonstrating the condensed, telegraphic nature of Classical Chinese, they proceed to offer three reasons for surmising that the literary language has never been close to any contemporary spoken language. The first has to do with the obvious discrepancy between auditory and visual modes (although they do not make the point, Chinese tetragraphs are more visually oriented than phonological scripts and hence more susceptible to exacerbation of this discrepancy). The second reason for being suspicious of Classical Chinese as a direct reflection of a given contemporary spoken style has to do with the morphosyllabic (they reluctantly refer to it as "logographic") script. Since each unit of the script is a semantic (not a phonological) unit, "ambiguity that arises out of homophony is not carried over from speech to writing." (p. 84) The third reason for doubting a close correspondence between Classical Chinese and any spoken language is due to its paucity of grammatical markers.

While we cannot be certain that the language(s) spoken in China during the classical period had more grammatical morphemes than are found in the classical literature, the large number of descriptive studies of languages of the world suggests that a spoken language with so few grammatical markers would be quite out of line.

Because virtually all contemporary Chinese writing includes elements of Classical Chinese, this accounts for the gulf between it and modern spoken varieties of Mandarin, not to mention other Sinitic languages. As to why the Chinese have not been able to rid their writing of such a heavy classical component, Li and Thompson turn to the literary and political history of China which naturally put a premium on nonvernacular styles until 1919. Another factor which has kept modern written Chinese quite distinct from modern spoken Mandarin topolects is the nature of the morphosyllabic script itself. Whereas massive homophony is not tolerable in the spoken languages (MSM has only about 1,200 distinct syllables [counting tonal distinctions, only about 400 if they are not taken into account]) and hence word-polysyllabicity is essential for clarity, the written language can rely on the semantic properties of the script to distinguish morphosyllabic homophones. Given this capacity of the tetragraphic script, say Li and Thompson, a writing style has developed which cannot be directly converted into a phonetic script. This accounts for the difficulty of implementing script reform without introducing an entirely new writing style.

Shirley Brice Heath, in chapter 6, draws our attention to the protean quality of literacy events which she defines as "any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes." (p. 93) Using ethnographic materials from a working-class all-Black community of the Carolinas, Heath shows how "The nature of oral and written language and the interplay between them is ever-shifting, and these changes both respond to and create shifts in the individual and societal meanings of literacy." (p. 115) In chapter 7, Georgia M. Green studies subject-verb inversions, which are customarily considered to be a phenomenon of literary written discourse, but discovers that they are used in both spoken and written language. Green believes that a more appropriate discrimination of the types of inversion should be based on colloquial and literary registers which cut across the spoken and written dichotomy. Livia Polanyi, in chapter 8, examines the function in everyday storytelling of "the indeterminacy and polysemy which result from the point of view and narrative voice of the storyteller merging with that of one of the characters in the story (sometimes called indirect free style narration)." (p. 155) Her claim is that such mergers of perspective, both in oral stories and literary texts, "are symptomatic of the difficulties narrators face in encoding several levels of

information simultaneously and should thus properly be seen as solutions of problems of reporting encountered by storytellers, regardless of medium or artistic intent." (pp. 155-156) In chapter 9, William Bright analyzes the poetic structure in the myths of the Karok tribe of California. Margaret Rader, in chapter 10, takes a very short story by a fifteen year old girl and expands it to show that even imaginative fiction is contextualized and that reader participation is basic to the literary experience.

Relying on his extensive work among the LoDagaa in Northern Ghana, Jack Goody explores in chapter 11 how the introduction of literacy to a society devalues types of knowledge not associated with books. Alton Becker's interesting chapter 12 on a literary Javanese poem does not really belong in this volume because it has nothing in particular to say about the relationship between the oral and written realms. What it does instead is attempt to comprehend the poem as a Javanese reader would through the medium of English. This involves removal of English cohesion and clarity to get at the Javanese "richness." Merely discussing the aspect of the single verb *anglakoni* requires half a dozen pages of elaborate explanation. Finally, in chapter 13, Robin Tolmach Lakoff describes a trend toward a new nonliteracy in our own times which is arising as a result of the mingling of oral and literate strategies in written communication.

The primary thrust of this volume is to advance to a new height the field of literacy studies that began in the sixties with the work of Jack Goody, Ian Watt, Marshall McLuhan, Eric Havelock, and Walter Ong on the effects of writing (especially the alphabet) upon cognitive and social processes and was continued during the seventies by Goody, Havelock, Ong, Sylvia Scribner, Michael Cole, Jenny Cook-Gumperz, John Gumperz, Paul Kay, and David R. Olson. If the essays in the volume under review are an accurate indication of the state of the field, we can expect that scholars will continue to debate the relationship between the oral and the literary and that these two realms will continue to shift and change as human society develops.

## Society and Culture

Scott Simmie and Bob Nixon. *Tiananmen Square*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989. xii + 224 pages.

The magnitude of the horror that occurred in Peking on June 4, 1989 will probably never be adequately measured. Although there are thousands of eyewitness reports concerning various phases of the massacre, it may be years before we will be able to bring them all together to form a reasonably accurate description of the overall tragedy. Even while the killings were still taking place, I began to gather every scrap of information I could get my hands on to counter the intense propaganda barrage of disinformation launched by the Chinese government. "No one died in the Square of the Gate of Heavenly Peace," they repeated *ad nauseam*. This was a lie, and the whole world knew it, but the communists apparently believed that if they repeated it loudly and frequently enough, it would somehow become truth.

Books like the one under review will help to keep alive the spirit of those who gave their lives for democracy in China during the spring of 1989. Although hundreds were also maimed and murdered in Chengtu, Shanghai, and elsewhere, the vast majority of the atrocities occurred in Peking. Hence it is proper for Simmie and Nixon, two Canadian journalists who have worked as consultants for China Central Television, to focus on Peking and, because the Square of the Gate of Heavenly Peace was the nerve center of the resistance, to center upon it within that city.

What sets this book apart from most of the others I have read on the subject is its firm grasp of the events leading up to the Peking bloodbath in the preceding months. The authors had lived in China for a total of about ten years and during that time had developed a large network of reliable informants who could assist them in gathering detailed information. They were also quite familiar with Peking and its environs so that they could quickly absorb the flood of data that came to them from various parts of the city. The unique black and white photographs in *Tiananmen Square* are

evidence that they<sup>and</sup> their associates were in the thick of things from the very beginning. This is not a pastiche of wire service accounts.

There are many fascinating details captured by the authors. One in particular that caught my attention was an interview with Hou Dejian, the thirty-two year old rock star from Taiwan who had defected to China and was one of the most celebrated figures in the Peking movement for democracy and freedom:

"We were called 'Mainland Pigs' by the Taiwanese," he said. "They felt we were occupying their land; occupying their homes.... In my classroom, there were only five or six children from the mainland. The rest were Taiwanese. After school, there would be children waiting on the side of the road. We'd fight very often." Hou Dejian understood why the locals wanted to beat him. In some ways, he even sympathized with their feelings that the Nationalists were a force of occupation. "The officers in Taipei [Taipei] were in charge of everything," he said. "Land owned by the Taiwanese was divided among the Guomindang [Kuomintang]. The Nationalists wanted everyone to speak Mandarin instead of Taiwanese or any local dialect."

(pp. 163-164)

Neither Hou nor anyone else seems to have reflected on the fact that his criticisms of the KMT could nearly all be said of the Communist Party rule on the mainland in most parts of the country. It is also significant that, without recognizing the full implications of his words, Hou mentions language conflict. China is beset with many deep problems, but I have never heard anyone recognize that language and script are two of the most insuperable and that something radical must be done about them soon if the nation is to survive. Until they admit that linguistic realities must be taken seriously into account and steps taken to ameliorate the situation, all other solutions (such as changing the political / social / economic / religious institutions) will lead China's reformers nowhere. It is so sad that sincere and dedicated patriots who want only the best for their country cannot even begin to see one of the main reasons for the tragedies that beset it.

People do not take well to coercion and deception. The continuing cycle of violence in China is a good indication that the citizens of China, like those of Eastern Europe and other oppressed nations of the world, will not rest until they are free. Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng, Yang Shangkun, Chen Yun, and their cohorts, who engineered one of this century's most infamous debacles, should read *Tiananmen Square* to find out what the people of China are really thinking and what the future holds in store for dictatorial cliques. The path to freedom will not be easy, but the people will prevail, at whatever cost. As formulated by Wen Huaisha, the Chinese philosopher whose words appropriately close this volume,

"In China, when you are trying to make some progress, you must make a lot of sacrifices, you must shed your blood. Democracy is not a favour to be conferred on anyone. You must fight for it. If there were only a trace of individuality in China -- a place infested by ignorance, backwardness and dirtiness -- there would still be a bright future awaiting us. We are now trying to travel a road in only a few dozen years that western Europe took five hundred years to travel. From the Dark Ages to ... liberation. Don't be too pessimistic. Happiness does not lie in the gaining of it, but rather in the pursuit of it."

Thomas H. C. Lee. *Government Education and Examinations in Sung China*. The Chinese University of Hong Kong Institute of Chinese Studies Monograph Series, 7. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1985. xiii + 327 pages.

This is a careful study of government sponsored schools during the Song period and their

relationship to the civil service examination system. The nature of the task Thomas Lee sets for himself compels him to take a largely political, institutional, and genealogical approach. Consequently, we find little in this book about the actual method of teaching at the ground level. Nor do we discover much about the operation of private and parochial academies or philanthropic and village schools. We do, however, learn an enormous amount about the official educational and testing apparatus, the regulations governing it, the individuals who were responsible for administering it, and the type of people who passed through it. Also covered are financial, managerial, and curricular aspects. Inasmuch as the Northern Song, in particular, was a time of radical swings between reformers and antireformers, this makes for a very eventful series of shifts in educational policy and practice. Lee does a commendable job of presenting this type of material in a coherent fashion.

This is not to say that Lee offers us only dry statistics and statutes. For example, "...we are told that a certain hard-working and serious student who later became a leading Neo-Confucian thinker, tearfully tore and burned his clothes after he realized that he had been tricked by his classmates into going with them to a wineshop where prostitutes joined them in drinking." (p. 174) Or take the candidate who went to a Buddhist temple near Foochow to pray for success in the examinations. Asleep in the temple, a one-legged ghost came to visit him in his dreams, chanting: "If a person becomes an official, then he will have a wife; if he has a wife, then he will have concubines; and if he has money, then he will have land." (p. 139) Never mind that Lee tends to discount the reliability of such anecdotes, they do help to bring his fact-filled account to life and he himself recognizes that they may at least have psychological validity.

The book is informed by the best Western, Japanese, and Chinese scholarship. It is provided with six appendices, sixteen tables, four charts, a bibliography, and a glossary-index.

ZHANG Zhishan, tr. and ed. *Zhongguo zhi Xing [Record of a Journey to China]*. Peking: Sanlian, 1988. 7 + 310 + 3 pages.

The title of this book is actually a misnomer. The Persian work on which it is based is called simply *Khatāy-nāmeḥ* which in Persian means no more than "book about China." Indeed, a reading of the text leads one to doubt whether the author Sa'id Ali Akbar Khatai ever made a journey to China. Certainly, as we shall see, his book is not structured as a travelogue and some scholars suspect that it was based on secondary sources, though spiced up in places with first-person expostulations to make it seem that Khatai had actually been to Cathay.

There are a lot of mysteries surrounding the present work, not the least being the identity of the original author. Sa'id Ali Akbar's surname, if it is a patronym, would indicate that his father had an intimate connection with China, perhaps as the descendant of a Persian-speaking merchant or advisor to the Mongol government, of whom there were not a few during the Yuan period. If it is toponymically derived, it implies that the author was himself born in China. Since we have no firm biographical data about the man, we cannot say for certain which is true. All we know is that his book was completed in the year 1516 at the Osman capital of Constantinople. From the fact that it was written in Persian with a slight admixture of Eastern Turkish, we may surmise that Sa'id Ali Akbar was from Transoxiana or, in any event, from somewhere in Central Asia.

The filiation of the text is even more complicated than the background of the author. It is neatly summarized in two charts at the back of the volume under review. The earliest extant Persian manuscript would appear to be that of Ahmed dating to 1776 and preserved in the Ashir Effendi Library of Istanbul (cataloged under I609). A Turkish translation by Hosain Effendi exists in a manuscript dated to 1582 preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris catalog number Supplement Turc 1130). The latter and its half dozen or so derivatives have regrettably been cited more frequently by scholars than the Persian original. As a matter of fact, this is the first published integral translation of the Old Persian *Khatāy-nāmeḥ* into any modern language known to me. I emphasize the word "published," because Zhang Zhishan's Mandarin rendition is a translation of

Muhammed Hamidullah's Englishing of Paul Kahle's German translation of the Persian. Neither Hamidullah's manuscript English version nor Kahle's manuscript German version were ever published. Scholars who are interested in seeing them brought to light may write to the keeper of the Kahle Collection, Michele Vallaro, at the Torino University Library (Italy).

There is quite a story to be told about how Zhang Zhishan obtained copies of the Kahle-Hamidullah manuscript (the English translation is written on the same sheets of paper as the German which was apparently originally completed in 1933) in 1983 (?). Without going into all the details here (they are recorded in Zhang's introduction and I have also heard some aspects of his persistent quest from Ellen Widmer, with whom he consulted). Suffice it to say that Zhang had a personal stake in the manuscript because his father, the well-known Occidentalist Zhang Xinglang, had helped Kahle identify some of the Chinese names and terms in the text through a correspondence they maintained during the mid-thirties. Zhang Zhishan was also attracted to the *Kātāy-nāmeḥ* because of the lavish praise its author heaps upon China. This is a point heavily emphasized by Ji Xianlin, the eminent Sanskritist and Tocharianist who helped Zhang procure a copy of the Kahle-Hamidullah manuscript. Both believe that the *Kātāy-nāmeḥ* can serve as an antidote to the alleged self-disparaging outlook that has swept over China since about 1840.

The Mandarin translation of the *Kātāy-nāmeḥ* occupies the bulk of the first half of the volume under review. In the second half, the editor offers a survey of scholarship on the book and Mandarin translations of about a dozen pertinent articles from Germany, France, Japan, and Iran.

In order to entice those who study the early Ming into making the Kahle-Hamidullah *Kātāy-nāmeḥ* available to a wider audience or at least consulting it themselves, I shall list here some of the delectables it contains. The book begins with the usual praise to god from the *Koran* and eulogies of the prophet, his associates, and reigning sultans. After other assorted prefatory sections that are typical of Islamic geographical tomes, it launches into a description of the roads to China, its borders, watchtowers, methods for signalling, and defenses. The second chapter discusses the roles of Islam and Buddhism in China. Chapter 3 deals with the layout of cities and the buildings therein, paying special attention to the function of *zhan* ("stations"). Chapter 4 is on military encampments, the training of troops, rules for both, and the rearing of horses. Chapter 5 describes the riches of the various cities and governmental treasuries -- precious metals, medicines, fruits, cloths, and the like are enumerated. Chapter 6 outlines the imperial establishment, including the harem and eunuchs. Chapter 7 presents an extraordinarily detailed account of the judicial and penal system. Chapter 8 tells of the celebrations held at the New Year's festival. Chapter 9 names the twelve provinces of China, their cities and products.

The tenth chapter outlines various customs, particularly those related to banquets and drinking. Chapter 11 depicts the geishas of the entertainment quarters that are to be found in every Chinese city, their activities which included praying for rain (tremendously fascinating information about how they were "recruited," their rituals, and how thousands of them might be executed if they failed to bring rain), and the wastrels who starved to death buying their charms. Chapter 12 relates the marvelous handicrafts and medical arts of China, as well as sports, games, astronomy, and calendars. Chapter 13 is about the legal system of the country and how it was supposedly devised by a sage administrator from a goddess of stone (needless to say, this is the least believable of all the chapters but important nonetheless because I believe that it may be based on a Judge Pao story). The fourteenth chapter consists of two skimpy sentences on education together with a paragraph on the punctuality demanded by the emperor. Chapter 15 narrates the commerce of Westerners, particularly Muslims, and their reception in China. Chapter 16 continues by outlining the intercourse of China with Kalmuks, Tibetans, Indians, and other peoples. Chapter 17 is on agriculture, famines, food price controls, fire prevention, public security, grain mills, and lumber. Chapter 18 treats of extreme asceticism, meditation, and fakirs. The nineteenth chapter explains China's currency as well as certain forms of etiquette and miscellaneous matters such as the setting off of firecrackers. Chapter 20 is on what struck Sa'id Ali Akbar as an absolute and unswerving adherence to the law demanded by the authorities in China. The twenty-first and final chapter is a delightful account of Chinese art galleries together with exclamations about the lavish amount of

clothing owned by Chinese individuals and, last but not least, a description of funeral observances.

By no means is everything that Sa'id Ali Akbar writes entirely reliable. There are obvious exaggerations and fictional and poetic interludes which can be readily discounted as well as an inherent bias in favor of Islam that can be easily ignored. Some of what can be learned from this book about the Islamic proclivities of the eunuchs in China merits further research. On the whole, the *Khatāy-nāmeḥ* is a valuable supplement to Chinese sources for the early Ming period. The book includes hundreds of priceless items of information about daily life in China that cannot be found in any Chinese text, official or otherwise. Specific data about food, the manufacture and uses of gunpowder, animals, relations with non-Sinitic peoples within and without China, entertainments, brawls, peddlers' noisemakers, alchemy, and the like can be found scattered throughout the pages of this book.

LIN Wushu. *Monijiao ji Qi Dongjian [Manichaeism and Its Eastward Expansion]*. Peking: Zhonghua, 1987. 2 + 2 + 337 + 4 + 60 pages.

In *T'oung Pao*, 73 (1987), 313-324, I wrote a long review assessing the state of the field in recent Chinese Manichaean studies. Not long after, I received a copy of Lin Wushu's monograph on the subject and was pleasantly surprised upon reading it to find that the author was remarkably current with Manichaean scholarship outside of China. Considering China's limited resources and minimal library faculties, I am impressed by the assiduousness of the author in tracking down most of the important primary and secondary sources on the subject worldwide. A glance at the bibliography of rather complete twentieth-century studies reveals that there are 58 pages of works in Western European languages, 2 pages for works in Russian, 3 pages for works in Japanese, and 8 pages for works in Chinese.

What I find most refreshing about Lin's research is that he considers it his duty to inform himself of the results of research carried out in other languages. Such an approach is absolutely essential for a polyglot world religion such as Manichaeism (texts have been found in Syriac, Latin, Greek, Coptic, Armenian, Middle Persian, Parthian, Old Turkish [Tujue], Sogdian, Sinitic, Tangut, and Arabic), but it would be beneficial for most other areas in which Chinese scholars concentrate. There is scarcely no field that touches upon Chinese studies in which significant work is not being done outside of China. Unless other Chinese scholars begin to show the determination of Lin Wushu to keep up with progress as reflected in European and Japanese language publications, it will not be long before China will lag far behind other countries in research on its own history and culture -- a most lamentable state indeed!

Lin's accomplishment is major and deserves high accolades. With this one book and a prolific surge of articles beginning in 1982, he has singlehandedly raised the level of Chinese Manichaean studies in China nearly to that elsewhere. Best of all for Manichaean studies as a whole, he has even managed to introduce some hitherto overlooked or unknown Chinese sources. These may also be of value to students of social, economic, and religious history. For the benefit of those who may not have access to Lin's book, I list here the contents:

1. new discoveries of Manichaean materials in this century and the state of research upon them.
2. preliminary investigation on the Manichaean theory of the two principles and three phases together with its origins.
3. the successful transmission of early Manichaeism in Central Asia.
4. inquiry on the date of the entry of Manichaeism into China.
5. Manichaeism during the Tang period and Central Asian Manichaean groups.
6. *The Scripture on Lao Zi's Transformation of the Barbarians* and Manichaeism.
7. the social and historical reasons for the Uighur acceptance of Manichaeism.
8. the feudalization of Manichaeism among the Kōchō Uighurs as revealed by

archeological discoveries.

9. a study of the term *mushe* (*hmwc'g* [?], Sogdian title of a high-ranking priest).
10. the doctrine of the light during the Sung period and its relation to Tang period Manichaeism.
11. vegetarian demon worshippers and Manichaeism
12. monastic Manichaeism along the southeast coast of China during the Song and Yuan periods.
13. an inquiry upon the *Scripture of the Three Phases*.
14. the origins of the Dunhuang manuscript entitled *Compendium of the Doctrines of Mani, the Buddha of Light*.
15. reconstruction of the fragments of the *Compendium*....
16. the theory of the unity of the sages in the *Compendium*....
17. on the original title of the *Fragmentary Scripture of Manichaeism, I*.
18. on the date of the Chinese translation of the *Manichaeian Hymns, Part II*.

Appendices include carefully edited and punctuated texts of the three works named in nos. 14-18 above. An extensive section of plates includes facsimiles of the Dunhuang manuscripts of nos. 14-18, photographs of Kōchō and artifacts (texts, paintings, and illustrated manuscripts) recovered there, paintings recovered from Turpan and Bāzāklik, and photographs of the little Manichaeian shrine at Huabiao Hill in Jinjiang county of Fukien province with its unusual late Ming (?) statue of Mani. The attributions for many of these plates should have been stated more fully.

The book is well printed and edited (Zhonghua also deserves praise for that), has few if any typographical errors that I could detect (including for the numerous ancient and modern foreign languages cited, paying close attention even to such small details as diacritics), and in general displays a very high level of philological rigor. This is an extremely rare achievement for a young scholar trained entirely in China.

E. N. Anderson. *The Food of China*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988. xvi + 263 pages.

K. C. Chang, ed. *Food in Chinese Culture: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977. ix + 429 pages.

By offering two books on the subject of food in China within a dozen years, Yale University Press cannot be said to have glutted the market. Quite the contrary, anyone who has ventured into his local bookstore lately will have noticed that books on Chinese food sell like *youtiao* ("oily strips," i.e., Chinese crullers). But these two titles are not your usual recipe books or manuals that tell you how to order dinner in a Chinese restaurant even if you cannot read a single tetragraph. Quite the contrary, here we have two volumes that take a deep and probing look at the history of food in China and its role in Chinese society. Neither of the books pretends to be a history of foodstuffs or food production in China. For that, one may turn to Shinoda Osamu's *Chūgoku Tabemono Shi* (1974) and Francesca Bray's 1984 volume of *Science and Civilisation in China* (6.2). Instead, what Anderson and Chang present are the court practices, folkways, lore, and literature concerning Chinese food.

Although both volumes are stimulating, perceptive, and informative, my preference leans to E. N. Anderson's long and thoughtful essay. This may be due partly to the unity which comes naturally from being a single-author book. But I suspect that it also has to do with Anderson's greater willingness to look beyond the borders of China for clues and insights. The volume edited by Chang is a typical representative of solid American Sinology which tends to see China throughout history as a virtually self-contained entity. Being one of those who is firmly convinced

that Chinese civilization owes as much to external inputs as it does to internal developments, I find Anderson's study more challenging and questing in its attempts to view Chinese food in a larger context. This in spite of the fact that I suspect Anderson may not even be your conventional Sinologist at all. He misromanizes the great pharmacist Li Shizhen's (Li Shih-chen's) name throughout as Li Shih-ch'en, "drunk" is *ts'ui* instead of *tsui*, and so forth (I suspect that he would be more at home with Cantonese, Teochiu, or Hokkien). Furthermore, he scarcely refers to any Chinese or Japanese language sources and only a few in French or German. That Anderson could nevertheless write such an astute and fact-filled book is a tribute both to English-language Sinology, which has made available for unilingual readers such a rich array of materials, and also to Anderson's indefatigable ability to track them down and use them to the hilt.

Another strength of Anderson's book lies in his keen awareness of China's multi-ethnic composition and the implications this holds for the culinary arts. Anderson is also to be commended for his clear recognition of the multiplicity of Sinitic (i.e., Han) languages (see especially p. 162), not to mention the many non-Sinitic tongues that are still spoken on Chinese territory. Anderson has one remarkable paragraph (pp. 16-17) about the linguistic diversity of the area that is now China around the beginning of the third millennium B.I.E.

One minor reservation I would like to register about Anderson's book has to do with the design. The Galliard typestyle, with the tops and bottoms of many letters fading away almost to nothing, may be elegant, but it is also very hard on the eyes. (The Times Roman of Chang's edited volume, though conventional, does not pose a strain for the eyes.) The right-hand margins are almost justified, yet not quite. Since all page numbers are on the left-hand side, it is not easy to spot the odd-numbered page indications that one would normally expect to find on the right. And so on. It is obvious that the designer was striving for an unusual appearance. That she has indeed achieved, but it proved distracting to me.

Rather than diluting the pleasure of Anderson's splendidly entertaining and richly edifying account by summarizing its contents, I invite the reader to taste (and savor) them for himself. He is sure to find some fascinating and delightful tidbit on every page.

Anderson, together with Marja L. Anderson, was also one of the contributors to the book by Chang. In their exceptionally fine concluding chapter on "Modern China: South," they begin with the mundane (ingredients and nutritional values) and end with the sublime (cosmological aspects). I found especially intriguing their assertion that food is communicative:

Like language, it combines phonemic units (ingredients) according to rules (cooking methods and, at a deeper level, principles of social interaction and of world view) to communicate messages about society, the individual, and so on. Unlike language, it has the pragmatic and positive value of nourishing the body in the process.

(p. 371 -- note: language has the capacity to nourish the mind)

Chang's book begins with an introduction by the editor. Although its primary purpose is to set the stage for the chapters that follow, the editor offers several creative insights. Among these is the concept of "food semantics" as "the terminological systems (i.e., hierarchical classifications), and the functional relevance of such systems, of food, drinks, preserving and cooking processes, cooking utensils, serving utensils, food personnel, and the behaviors and beliefs associated with all of the above." (p. 19) The rest of the volume is divided up strictly according to chronology. The first chapter, on ancient China, is by the editor and covers the period from approximately 5000-3200 B.I.E. to 200 B.I.E. It is followed by Ying-shih Yü's account of food during the Han period. There is then a jump to the Tang period which is described by Edward Schafer. It is regrettable that the period of disunion was omitted entirely, especially considering the excellent sources available (e.g., *Loyang Qielan Ji [A Record of the Monasteries of Loyang]*) and *Qimin Yaoshu [Essential Arts for the Common People]*) and the intricate dynamics between the north which was largely controlled by Altaic peoples ruling over a largely Sinitic population and the south which was controlled by displaced Sinitic groups encroaching upon Austronesian and Thai-Kadai

peoples. The fourth chapter is by Michael Freeman and deals with the Song period. Next come 16 pages of illustrations, not all of which are equally authentic and illuminating, pertaining to the various chapters. The fifth chapter, on the Yuan and Ming periods, is by Frederick Mote. Jonathan Spence writes about the Qing, while Vera Y. N. Hsu and Francis L. K. Hsu are responsible for the northern part of modern China. As mentioned above, the Andersons' chapter on the southern part of modern China concludes the book.

In general, the chapters of *Food in Chinese Culture* are of high quality, but they are not all of the same mold. Chang naturally is forced to rely more heavily on archeological evidence than the others, but he does a fine job of bringing it alive by supplementing the record with early textual references where possible. Yü likewise makes extensive use of archeological materials, especially the spectacular finds from Mawangdui in Hunan and Han wall-paintings from various parts of China, but also refers to standard historical texts as well. Unlike Chang, who attempts a certain amount of theorizing, Yü seems content merely to recount the available data. Not only does he shy away from all analysis, he is at pains to disclaim confidence in anthropological interpretation. This puts him at odds with several of the other contributors. Schafer's treatment of the Tang is masterful and exceedingly well documented. Here he shows his famous old passion for boundless philology such as he displayed in *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand* (1963), *The Empire of Min* (1954), *The Vermilion Bird* (1967), and *Shore of Pearls* (1970). Freeman writes in a more expansive, discursive mode. Because the Song is blessed with so many detailed pictorial and textual records of life in its capitals, this chapter seems to revivify the period in a way that is not possible for many of the other premodern chapters.

Mote's chapter begins with a discussion of the emergence of an integrated world history, based on some unpublished papers of Joseph Fletcher, that is supposed to have taken place around the sixteenth century. I applaud this opening of the mind of Sinology to the rest of the globe, but still hope that scholars will one day recognize the relatedness of Eurasia, and indeed of the entire world, from the very beginning of human history. The tempo and intensity of contacts among nations may have increased after the sixteenth century (probably largely due to technological reasons), but there never was a time when any part of humanity was totally isolated for long. Mote goes on to claim that there were no great famines, disasters, or epidemics during the Yuan and Ming and that "The masses of the Chinese people were basically well fed, well clothed, and well housed throughout most of their history." (p. 199) This does not jibe with what Walter Mallory described in *China: Land of Famine* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1926) and many other studies by more recent scholars (e.g. Robert Entemann, "Migration and Settlement in Sichuan, 1644-1796," Harvard University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1982). This is crucial for a long-standing controversy in studies on Chinese culinary culture in which one side attributes the great variety of dishes to the necessity of experimentation as a result of extreme poverty (Jacques Gernet, *Daily Life in China on the Eve of the Mongol Invasion, 1250-76* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962], p. 135) and the other, represented by Mote, to esthetic and playful impulses fostered by surplus and leisure. In my estimation, the problem is complicated enough that it has to be examined again by both sides. Mote's chapter is distinguished by extensive original translations from literary and other types of works.

Spence's chapter is the first for which sufficient numerical data are available to draw meaningful statistical conclusions and to differentiate among the diets of different social classes. Clearly the weakest chapter in the book is that of the Hsus. While not without its own value, this short account is more on the order of personal reminiscences than a documented, scholarly essay like the others. As I have indicated above, the Andersons' essay is exemplary in its breadth and detail.

Taken together, *The Food of China* and *Food in Chinese Culture* tell me more than I could have imagined that I could ever have learned about the symbolism and folkways of Chinese food. But they do not answer all of my questions. I still would like to know if the plain Chinese steamed bun known as *mantou* is in any way derived from the meat-filled Soviet Central Asian *mantei*. It is curious that, according to the Song work entitled *Shiwu jiyuan* [*A Record of the Origins of*

*Events and Things*], the *mantou* (q.v.), also written with tetragraphs that are pronounced in Modern Standard Mandarin as *mandou*, was clearly derived from a foreign source and that it was originally meat-filled (mutton or pork, just as the *mantei*). And there are still many facts to straighten out about the history of tea before it reached China from the Indo-Burmese border area. And the fortunes of fortune cookies, about which I am dying to know more....

Jacques Gernet. *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures*. Translated from the French (*Chine et christianisme* [Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1982]) by Janet Lloyd. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1985. vii + 310 pages.

D. E. Mungello. *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989. First published in 1985 as *Studia Leibnitiana, Supplementa 25* by Fritz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GmbH. 405 pages.

These two books examine the same subject -- the vicissitudes of Christianity in China during the seventeenth century -- but from completely opposite ends of the spectrum. Gernet is interested in observing how the Chinese reacted to (and ultimately rejected) Christianity, while Mungello aims to document the adjustments of the Jesuits to China. It is rather amazing how dissimilar the two views are. Mungello himself has remarked on this disparity:

The failure of Ricci's Jesuit successors to adapt the Confucian-Christian synthesis to later circumstances demands viewing the seventeenth-century China Mission in an evolving historical context. It is my emphasis on this evolving context which distinguishes my approach from that found in Jacques Gernet's *Chine et Christianisme* (1982). Although we often deal with similar material, M. Gernet's tendency to treat the Chinese cultural context in terms of more constant philosophical and theological categories leads him to some very different conclusions, including a greater criticism of Ricci.<sup>1</sup>

1 Another difference which distinguishes my treatment of the seventeenth-century Sino-European cultural encounter from that of M. Gernet, at least where it overlaps in subject matter, is in regard to the choice of sources for reconstructing the European side of the encounter. (Gernet's attempt to reconstruct the Chinese side of this encounter transcends the scope of my work.) But in regard to the European side, I believe that M. Gernet's over-reliance upon French-language sources distorts his picture. Had he used some of the major Latin sources, such as Martini's *Sinicae historiae decas prima* and Couplet's *Confucius Sinarum philosophus* -- no Latin-language work appears in his list of sources -- he could have reconstructed a fuller picture of the evolution of the European side of this encounter and perhaps had a more sympathetic understanding of certain Jesuits.

(p. 357)

Regardless of their disagreement on the achievements of the Jesuits in seventeenth-century China, it is striking that both Gernet and Mungello focus on language as one of the key elements in this monumental encounter between cultures. No other single topic merits more attention or emphasis in the two books than the nature of Chinese language and writing.

Much of what the earliest Europeans who wrote on the subject had to say about the Chinese script and Sinitic languages was pure poppycock. The two primary reasons for this were, first, the mythological accounts concerning the origins of language and script entertained by the Chinese themselves and, second, inadequate exposure to firsthand materials. One of the most egregious seventeenth-century oddities was the notion that Chinese was thought to be close to the simple, clear, and uniform Primitive Language that existed before the dispersal of tongues occasioned by the construction of the Tower of Babel. Even Francis Bacon was sufficiently deceived by the

hyperbole surrounding the tetragraphs to imagine that they could be of use in establishing the Real Characters of a universal language.

Another strange idea that attracted the attention of many European savants around the third-quarter of the century was Andreas Müller's *Clavis Sinica* (Key to Chinese). Mungello gives a fascinating account of the whole painful episode. Those who believed in the possibility of such a device were driven by two erroneous assumptions: 1. the Chinese script was logical and thus susceptible of rational classification, 2. though excruciatingly difficult to learn without the Key (unknown even to the Chinese themselves!), Chinese languages and script would become utterly easy to master once the secrets of their construction were discovered. More realistic and sober were the remarks of the Jesuit missionary, Louis-Daniel Le Comte, about a quarter of a century later. "He spoke of the disgust that the study of Chinese characters aroused in the Chinese. The need of 'taking into one's head the frightful multitude of characters' was a 'very heavy cross that one is obliged to carry during his whole life.'" (Mungello, p. 341). Fortunately, the *Clavis Sinica* in subsequent years evolved into what, for all practical purposes, were the earliest grammars of Chinese. Yet the bitter lessons of the inevitable failure of European Proto-Sinologists to find an easy Key to the Chinese tetragraphs three centuries ago seem to have been lost on the hordes of Pollyannas who still dream of devising a facile solution to "the problem of the Chinese characters." When this perennial chimera is at last discovered, it will then be miraculously simple to get the tetragraphs in and out of computers, to order them readily in lists, to send them over telegraph lines, and the like. Alas, they all end up like pitiful Andreas Müller, embittered and often impoverished. When will they ever learn? Oh, when will they ever learn? The saddest tragedy of all is that the Andreas Müllers of the world far outnumber the Louis-Daniel Le Comtes.

Gernet's observations concerning the impact of language upon the presentation of Christian doctrine are of an entirely different order from Mungello's account of the European search for a key to unlock the mysteries of the alien script and tongue. Instead of detailing their frustrations in learning Chinese, Gernet focuses on acknowledged masters such as Ricci and Trigault and emphasizes their inability to express basic Christian ideas adequately and accurately in Sinitic languages. "In order to express his own ideas, Ricci is led, without realising it, to use a neo-Confucian or Buddhist vocabulary, which evokes concepts quite incompatible with those of eternal salvation and redemption." (p. 48) Even after 300 years, the problem seemed insoluble. For, in 1908, the Protestant minister, C. W. Mateer, still complainingly questioned, "Is there any convenient method of stating the doctrine of the Trinity which does not imply the grossest materialism?" (p. 48) Gernet gives countless specific instances of the translation of Christian terms that are twisted and distorted in Chinese to the point that they completely lose their intended meaning. Even though the missionaries tried to redefine them, adoption of words like *shangdi* ("sovereign on high") and *tian* ("Heaven") to refer to God called forth so many inappropriate associations that it vitiated the Christian doctrine. He also shows how the same problems beset the Jews of Kaifeng. So disconcerted by this dilemma does Gernet grow that, in one short paragraph, he opines "The language itself deforms the Christian message, giving it alien, Chinese resonances that are quite incompatible with it." (p. 49) Linguists would almost certainly take violent exception to this statement, but one wonders whether they could actually disprove it.

It is telling that Gernet chooses to conclude his stimulating book with a section entitled "Language and Thought." Here he tackles head-on what I consider to be the central issue in the study of Chinese civilization, viz. the extent to which Chinese ideas have been shaped by Chinese language and script. As I have pointed out on numerous other occasions, this is an extraordinarily sensitive topic, one which opens those who raise it to the damning charge of ethnocentrism. At the same time, it is a serious subject that simply will not go away.

Gernet begins his disquisition with a provocative quotation from Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*:

The wonderful family resemblance of all Indian, Greek and German philosophising is easily enough explained. In fact, where there is affinity of language, owing to the

common philosophy of grammar -- I mean owing to the unconscious domination and guidance of similar grammatical functions -- it cannot but be that everything is prepared at the outset for a similar development and succession of philosophical systems: just as the way seems barred against certain other possibilities of world interpretation.

So important and illuminating are the following nine pages in Gernet's book and the notes which accompany them that I am sorely tempted to cite them in toto, but will refrain from doing so for fear of running afoul of the International Copyright Convention. Rather than risking the good name of *Sino-Platonic Papers*, I shall merely encourage all students of China to read Gernet's book itself. Considered objectively, it is sure to advance our understanding of the very difficult problem of the relationship between language and thought.

In spite of their opposite approaches and contrasting conclusions, both of the volumes under review are valuable for their extensive research and thoughtful analyses. In my estimation, Gernet and Mungello are equally correct in their accounts concerning the fate of Christianity in China and in no area are they more correct than in their perception that language and script were fundamental factors governing the Chinese (in)ability to accept Christian ideas and values.

Perhaps it is not inappropriate to remind ourselves at the close of this review that it was the Jesuits who introduced the Romanization of Sinitic languages and that the gradual dissolution of the traditional Chinese world view and its mutually supportive institutions began from that moment. If anything, the battle over language, script, and ideology has only intensified in recent years. Considering the frequency and vituperousness of the polemics on the subject in the major Chinese media, we can expect a decisive climax in the not too distant future.

#### Short Notice

Robert Jastrow. *The Enchanted Loom: Mind in the Universe*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983; originally published in 1981. 183 pages.

The author is the founder of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies which undertakes research in astrophysics, cosmology, and planetary science under the auspices of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. In this, the final volume of a trilogy which also includes *Red Giants and White Dwarfs* and *Until the Sun Dies*, Jastrow "explains how the latest breakthroughs in astronomy, biology, and the brain sciences have given us a new view of man's place in the cosmos, his origins, his present nature, and his destiny. ...[He] draws on these discoveries to present a startling conclusion: that man is not the last word in the development of intelligence but only a step toward a new and still more intelligent form of life that is now rapidly evolving. In the near future, says Jastrow, the human mind and the silicon-based brain of the computer will become one, ushering in an age of indestructible, infinitely expandable, creative, and immortal intelligence." (from the back cover)

In Memoriam  
Chang-chen HSU  
August 6, 1957-June 27, 1989

{1}

Hsu Chang-chen, ed. and tr. *Yin-tu hsien-tai hsiao-shuo hsüan [A Selection of Contemporary Indian Fiction]*. Hsin-ch'ao wen-k'u [New Tide Series], 316. Taipei: Chih-wen, 1986. 313 pages.

{2}

\_\_\_\_\_. *T'o-fu tzu-hui yen-chiu (Mastering TOEFL Vocabulary)*. Taipei: Shu-lin, 1988. viii + 295 pages.

{3}

\_\_\_\_\_. *Tsui-chung-yao-te i pai ke Ying-wen tzu-shou tzu-ken (100 English Prefixes and Word Roots)*. Taipei: Shu-lin, 1988. xix + 666 pages.

{4}

\_\_\_\_\_. *Fa-wen tzu-hui chieh-kou fen-hsi -- tzu-shou yü tzu-ken (Les préfixes et les racines de la langue française)*. Taipei: Shu-lin, 1988. xvii + 363 pages.

{5}

\_\_\_\_\_, comp. and tr. *Hsi-yü yü Fo-chiao wen-shih lun-chi (Collection of Articles on Studies of Central Asia, India, and Buddhism)*. Taipei: The Student Book Company, 1989. vi + 320 pages.

Judging from his phenomenal achievements during the thirty-odd years of his short life, Chang-chen Hsu would undoubtedly have developed into one of the greatest Chinese linguists of all times had he been granted another decade or two to exercise his undisputed brilliance more fully. Celebrated as a virtual folk hero throughout Taiwan for having scored a near perfect 677 on the TOEFL test (apparently the world record) in November, 1987, Hsu was much more than just a master of English test-taking. So multifaceted were his interests and abilities, it is difficult to know how to begin to describe them. Although I hope that someone will one day write Hsu's complete biography, I did not know him personally and, fearing that this might disqualify me from doing justice to this extraordinary young man, do not presume to be adequately equipped to take upon myself this task. My purpose in this brief memorial notice is simply to lament the passing of one of the most enormously gifted graduate students I have ever encountered.

Chang-chen Hsu attended National Chengchi University where he majored in English from September, 1975 to June, 1977. In the fall of 1977, he transferred to National Taiwan University where he continued his study of English and graduated with a B.A. in June, 1980. He was granted a full fellowship from Princeton University but declined it to fulfill his military service obligation and then to continue his unquenchable thirst for language preparation. In June, 1984 he began teaching English at the Y.M.C.A. in Taipei and in August of the same year, he also started working as a TOEFL teacher at the Luxin Language Center. His fame quickly spread as an extremely effective teacher, so that by March, 1985 he had been hired by the Merica English Institute, one of Taiwan's most prestigious foreign language schools, at a salary reportedly equivalent to approximately \$6,000 per month (at 1989 values). Other schools and organizations vied for his talents, but the only one with which he maintained a regular relationship was the Buddhist temple at Fo-kuang-shan in Kaohsiung where he instructed the nuns in English. This meant that he was flying from Taipei to Kaohsiung about once a week during the last year of his life. His willingness to teach at a Buddhist temple was not whimsical, however, since by this time he had developed a serious interest in Indian language, philosophy, and literature.

Hsu stayed on longer in Taiwan than many people felt was wise, but he wanted to perfect his

language skills before going abroad to receive advanced training. He also had a dream of travelling around the world to record the vanishing tongues of neglected peoples and insisted that he had to save up a huge amount of money to finance these and other researches for the rest of his life after graduate school. By the beginning of 1989, Hsu felt ready to embark on the momentous next phase of his career. He applied to the University of Pennsylvania and was naturally accepted without any hesitation. I secured a full graduate fellowship for him in the Department of Oriental Studies and looked forward with great excitement to having him as a student. A glance at his personal statement will explain why:

With the advent of Buddhism, Indian civilization exerted a great impact upon a large part of Asia, especially on East and Southeast Asia. Chinese and some other East Asian languages were thus directly and indirectly influenced by ancient Indian languages. It is in the study of these influences that my chief interest lies.

The translations of Buddhist scriptures into the Chinese language beginning in the first century of our era caused the Chinese to take a more self-conscious interest in their own language. The use of Chinese script to render Sanskrit proper names and philosophical terms casts considerable light on the pronunciation of the relevant periods. The sounds given by men of the Han and T'ang dynasties in transliterating Sanskrit words have therefore been treated as data for comparison in the reconstruction of the pronunciation of ancient and medieval Chinese. Scholars like B. Karlgren, H. Maspero, Lo Chang-pei, Li Fang-kuei, E. G. Pulleyblank, etc., have more or less used this approach in their works. However, so far there have only been scanty and unorganized examinations of data in this respect. These data for comparison are furthermore fewer than those afforded by other comparative methods, and their value is further diminished by the fact that we still do not know precisely when a certain transliteration was first used, nor in what dialect. I am interested in looking into this area thoroughly, hoping to produce data leading to a more conclusive result of study.

Another area of interest worthy of extensive survey is the possible syntactical influences that Sanskrit and Prakrit had on Chinese through the translation of Buddhist scriptures. The bulk of extant Chinese Buddhist scriptures translated from ancient Indian languages has scarcely been examined in its syntactic aspect. A thorough study of these materials may help determine the role of this Buddhist literature in the syntactic development of Chinese. For example, it seems that the usage of the preposition *yü* 於 between a transitive verb and an object did not appear in ancient Chinese texts until the third century of our era when translators of Buddhist scriptures like Dharmarakṣa (3rd-4th c.) and Kumārajīva (4th-5th c.) started writing such phrases as *hu yü fa-yin* 護於法音, *chi yü ta-fa-ku* 擊於大法鼓, etc. More instances of this nature may be brought forward only after a comprehensive study is completed.

At present, I can read and translate Chinese, French, German and Japanese. I have also been studying Sanskrit and Tibetan for 1-2 years. In addition to these languages, I have taken courses in Latin, Russian and Thai. I wish to continue my study of these and other languages, especially of Sanskrit in which your school has excellent courses to offer.

I am presently taking courses in Chinese and Sino-Tibetan linguistics at National Taiwan University to enrich my background knowledge of the field. On my reading list for early 1989 are also works on syntax, phonetics, phonology and historical linguistics, such as *Introduction to the Theory of Grammar* by Henk van Riemsdijk and Edwin Williams, *Transformational Syntax* by Andrew Radford, *A Course in Phonetics* by Peter Ladefoged, *Generative Phonology* by Sanford A. Schane, *Historical Linguistics* by Theodora Bynon, etc. These works will be able to make up for what lack of formal training one might have in the relevant subjects.

For the past few years I have done quite a bit of research on the cultural and religious transmission between China and India in medieval times. At present I am

writing a series of essays on the Sanskrit education of Chinese monks from the 2nd century to the 11th. A background knowledge in this aspect shall be a great help to the study of the influences of ancient Indian languages on Chinese. I am also planning to translate into Chinese in early 1989 *Gengogaku no tanjō* 言語学の誕生 by Kazama Kiyozō 風間喜代三, and have it published in late 1989. The translation of this Japanese book on historical linguistics shall help me acquire more basic knowledge needed for my study in the future.

Never before had I received an application from a prospective student which demonstrated such breadth of purpose, astuteness concerning critical issues, attention to the need for philological exactitude, and astonishing command of relevant sources and materials. Furthermore, the statement was written in a grammatically correct, succinct, elegant prose that would have been the envy of many native speakers of English. I was absolutely flabbergasted and found it hard to believe that such a person actually existed. Yet there were his GRE scores (480, 780, 600) to corroborate the huge native ability displayed in his statement. Then there were the recommendations from some of Taiwan's most eminent linguists such as Hwang-chen Gong who casually mentioned that Hsu had consulted him on some Tangut texts he had been looking at and Yü-hung Chang who revealed that Hsu always felt ill-prepared for the tasks which he set himself and that he always competed against himself. It was the overwhelming drive to command all the necessary tools to be an eminent historical linguist and genuine historian of Chinese civilization in the largest sense that seems most to have characterized him, not any desire to intimidate others. Hsu was not a Taiwanese, and yet he learned to speak and understand the Taiwanese language. This is indicative not only of his boundless linguistic ability, but his openness and acceptance of different cultures. Chang-chen Hsu, I salute your gifted, noble soul!

Hsu assumed truly legendary proportions in the eyes of his compatriots. Newspapers wrote articles about him and his picture was posted in bookstores. When I was in Taiwan at the beginning of September, 1989, people were still stunned by his death. Jerome Su, the Managing Director of Bookman Books (Shu-lin) and publisher of several of Hsu's major works, solemnly spoke of Hsu's utter dedication to linguistic scholarship and language pedagogy.

The circumstances of Chang-chen Hsu's death are intensely disturbing. Just before he was set to depart for Philadelphia, Hsu allegedly felt the impulse to do a bit of touring around Taiwan for one last look at his homeland. Apparently, however, when he left Taipei to go to Kaohsiung for a final class at Fo-kuang-shan, he did not tell his friends and relatives that he would make a side excursion to the Pescadores. He must have had deep misgivings about the trip; after changing his airplane ticket six times (according to Formosa Airline officials), Hsu reluctantly boarded a Cessna C-440 (flight B-12206) with ten other passengers plus pilot and copilot bound for Wonan. Less than a minute after takeoff at 9:04 a.m. on Tuesday, June 27, 1989, the plane flipped over and fell precipitously out of the sky (having reached a height of only 250 feet), reportedly "for mechanical reasons." It crashed into a new five-story apartment building that was within a thousand meters from the end of the runway. Only one person miraculously walked away from the crash; Chang-chen Hsu and all eleven others on board perished in the flaming wreckage (from *Lien-he Pao / United Daily News* [June 28, 1989], p. 1 and other sources). The news of Hsu's death was broadcast prominently on radio, television, and in the press and an investigation (the results of which are unknown to me) was ordered. The whole episode seems so improbable that it takes on an eerie atmosphere of unreality. And yet I know that Hsu is dead because he is not in my classes and his friends in Taiwan told me that he is no longer among the living.

Every time I look at the pile of books written by Chang-chen Hsu that lies in my office, I am almost moved to tears. Each one of them shows the touch of a master. {1} consists of fifteen carefully chosen stories by Rabindranath Tagore, Rajendra Yadav, Premendra Mitra, R. K. Narayan, and others. They are expertly translated and supplied with excellent, informative notes. At the end of the book is a sensitive afterword which discusses each of the stories and a scholarly appendix on the current Indian linguistic scene. Hsu's ability to capture in these last fifty-some pages of the book the essentials of Indian language, society, and literature is almost breathtaking.

In spite of the nifty English title (more accurately rendered as *Research on TOEFL Vocabulary*) given to it by the publisher, {2} is a meticulous study of the testing procedures and principles employed over a period of several years by the Educational Testing Service. {3} and {4} together amount to a spectacular display of Hsu's seemingly innate sense of linguistic structures. Both are extremely impressive for their accurate bibliographies, precise use of diacriticals, absence of misspellings and other mechanical errors, neat organization, and learned disquisitions. It should be noted that Hsu sought out native speakers (to whom he gives appropriate credit) to vet these and other works of his.

{5} is a virtuoso performance of Hsu's talent for selecting, translating, and copiously annotating the best scholarship in the world on those subjects with which he intended to occupy himself for the next period of his life.

Besides the books sketched above, there was a life of Gandhi, articles in *Chung-wai wen-hsüeh* [*Literature from China and Abroad*], *Chung-kuo pien-cheng* [*China's Border Administration*], *Shu-mu chi-k'an* [*Bibliographical Quarterly*], *Chung-kuo Fo-chiao* [*Chinese Buddhism*], and other first-rank journals from Taiwan. It is hard to imagine how Hsu would have had the time to do the research for and write so many fine books and articles within a period of about five years at the same time he was teaching English in several foreign language schools. Hsu's concentration and diligence must have been monumental for him to accomplish so much in such a short time.

Chang-chen Hsu's death is a tragedy of unparalleled dimensions for Chinese linguistics. Because language is so central to civilization and because China's languages are currently in such tremendous flux, Hsu's tragic demise is also a terrible blow to the nation as a whole. More than that, Chang-chen Hsu's premature passing has robbed all humanity of a large-spirited genius and visionary. He would have been able to do so much to heal the wounds between China and the rest of the world simply because he had such a grand capacity to reach out without fear, to seek knowledge with zestful curiosity, and to convey it skillfully to his fellowmen.

My short contact with Chang-chen Hsu has left a deep impression upon me. I am haunted by the flawless, beautiful, gentle, enthusiastic English speaker saying to me over the phone from Taiwan the week before his death, "I am looking forward eagerly to studying with you, Professor Mair." Little did he know that I was equally looking forward to studying with him. When I heard of Hsu's death, I almost collapsed on the spot and even now whenever I think of him I feel painfully bereft.

May China and the world be blessed with other such precious souls, capacious minds, and determined wills to carry on the mission of Chang-chen Hsu! *Requiescat in pace.*



## Previous Issues

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
1	Nov. 1986	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	The Need for an Alphabetically Arranged General Usage Dictionary of Mandarin Chinese: A Review Article of Some Recent Dictionaries and Current Lexicographical Projects	31
2	Dec. 1986	Andrew Jones <i>Hiroshima</i>	The Poetics of Uncertainty in Early Chinese Literature	45
3	March 1987	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	A Partial Bibliography for the Study of Indian Influence on Chinese Popular Literature	iv, 214
4	Nov. 1987	Robert M. Sanders <i>University of Hawaii</i>	<a href="#">The Four Languages of "Mandarin"</a>	14
5	Dec. 1987	Eric A. Havelock <i>Vassar College</i>	Chinese Characters and the Greek Alphabet	4
6	Jan. 1988	J. Marshall Unger <i>University of Hawaii</i>	Computers and Japanese Literacy: Nihonzin no Yomikaki Nōryoku to Konpyuta	13
7	Jan. 1988	Chang Tsung-tung <i>Goethe-Universität</i>	Indo-European Vocabulary in Old Chinese	i, 56
8	Feb. 1988	various	<a href="#">Reviews (I)</a>	ii, 39
9	Dec. 1988	Soho Machida <i>Daitoku-ji, Kyoto</i>	Life and Light, the Infinite: A Historical and Philological Analysis of the Amida Cult	46
10	June 1989	Pratoom Angurarohita <i>Chulalongkorn University Bangkok</i>	Buddhist Influence on the Neo-Confucian Concept of the Sage	31
11	July 1989	Edward Shaughnessy <i>University of Chicago</i>	<a href="#">Western Cultural Innovations in China, 1200 BC</a>	8

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
12	Aug. 1989	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	The Contributions of T'ang and Five Dynasties Transformation Texts ( <i>pien-wen</i> ) to Later Chinese Popular Literature	71
13	Oct. 1989	Jiaosheng Wang <i>Shanghai</i>	The Complete <i>Ci</i> -Poems of Li Qingzhao: A New English Translation	xii, 122
14	Dec. 1989	various	Reviews (II)	69
15	Jan. 1990	George Cardona <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	On Attitudes Toward Language in Ancient India	19
16	March 1990	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Three Brief Essays Concerning Chinese Tocharistan	16
17	April 1990	Heather Peters <i>University Museum of Philadelphia</i>	Tattooed Faces and Stilt Houses: Who Were the Ancient Yue?	28
18	May 1990	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Two Non-Tetragraphic Northern Sinitic Languages  a. Implications of the Soviet Dungan Script for Chinese Language Reform b. Who Were the Gyámi?	28
19	June 1990	Bosat Man <i>Nalanda</i>	<a href="#">Backhill/Peking/Beijing</a>	6
20	Oct. 1990	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Introduction and Notes for a Translation of the Ma-wang-tui MSS of the <i>Lao Tzu</i>	68

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
21	Dec. 1990	Philippa Jane Benson <i>Carnegie Mellon University</i>	Two Cross-Cultural Studies on Reading Theory	9, 13
22	March 1991	David Moser <i>University of Michigan</i>	Slips of the Tongue and Pen in Chinese	45
23	April 1991	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Tracks of the Tao, Semantics of Zen	10
24	Aug. 1991	David A. Utz <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Language, Writing, and Tradition in Iran	24
25	Aug. 1991	Jean DeBernardi <i>University of Alberta</i>	Linguistic Nationalism: The Case of Southern Min	22 + 3 figs.
26	Sept. 1991	JAO Tsung-i <i>Chinese University of Hong Kong</i>	Questions on the Origins of Writing Raised by the Silk Road	10
27	Aug. 1991	Victor H. Mair, ed. <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	<a href="#"><i>Schriftfestschrift: Essays in Honor of John DeFrancis on His Eightieth Birthday</i></a>	ix, 245
28	Sept. 1991	ZHOU Youguang <i>State Language Commission, Peking</i>	The Family of Chinese Character-Type Scripts ( <i>Twenty Members and Four Stages of Development</i> )	11
29	Sept. 1991	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	<a href="#"><u>What Is a Chinese “Dialect/Topolect”? Reflections on Some Key Sino-English Linguistic Terms</u></a>	31
30	Oct. 1991	M. V. Sofronov <i>Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow</i>	Chinese Philology and the Scripts of Central Asia	10

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
31	Oct. 1991	various	Reviews (III)	68
32	Aug. 1992	David McCraw <i>University of Hawaii</i>	How the Chinawoman Lost Her Voice	27
33	Sept. 1992	FENG Lide and Kevin Stuart <i>Chuankou No. 1 Middle School and Qinghai Education College</i>	Interethnic Contact on the Inner Asian Frontier: The Gangou People of Minhe County, Qinghai	34
34	Oct. 1992	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Two Papers on Sinolinguistics  1. A Hypothesis Concerning the Origin of the Term <i>fanqie</i> ("Countertomy") 2. East Asian Round-Trip Words	13
35	Nov. 1992	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i> with an added note by Edwin G. Pulleyblank	Reviews (IV)	37
36	Feb. 1993	XU Wenkan <i>Hanyu Da Cidian editorial offices, Shanghai</i>	Hanyu Wailaici de Yuyuan Kaozheng he Cidian Bianzuan (Philological Research on the Etymology of Loanwords in Sinitic and Dictionary Compilation)	13
37	March 1993	Tanya Storch <i>University of New Mexico</i>	Chinese Buddhist Historiography and Orality	16
38	April 1993	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	The Linguistic and Textual Antecedents of <i>The Sutra of the Wise and the Foolish</i>	95

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
39	Aug. 1993	Jordan Paper <i>York University</i>	A Material Case for a Late Bering Strait Crossing Coincident with Pre-Columbian Trans-Pacific Crossings	17
40	Sept. 1993	Michael Carr <i>Center for Language Studies, Otaru University of Commerce</i>	<i>Tiao</i> -Fish through Chinese Dictionaries	68
41	Oct. 1993	Paul Goldin <i>Harvard University</i>	Miching Mallecho: The <i>Zhanguo ce</i> and Classical Rhetoric	27
42	Nov. 1993	Renchin-Jashe Yulshul <i>Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Kokonor (Qinghai)</i> and Kevin Stuart <i>Institute of Foreign Languages, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia</i>	Kham Tibetan Language Materials	39
43	Dec. 1993	MA Quanlin, MA Wanxiang, and MA Zhicheng <i>Xining</i> Edited by Kevin Stuart <i>Kokonor</i>	Salar Language Materials	72
44	Jan. 1994	Dolkun Kamberi <i>Columbia University</i>	The Three Thousand Year Old Charchan Man Preserved at Zaghunluq	15
45	May 1994	Mark Hansell <i>Carleton College</i>	The Sino-Alphabet: The Assimilation of Roman Letters into the Chinese Writing System	28
46	July 1994	various	Reviews (V)	2, 155

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
47	Aug. 1994	Robert S. Bauer <i>Mahidol University Salaya Nakornpathom, Thailand</i>	Sino-Tibetan *kolo “Wheel”	11
48	Sept. 1994	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Introduction and Notes for a Complete Translation of the <i>Chuang Tzu</i>	xxxiv, 110
49	Oct. 1994	Ludo Rocher <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Orality and Textuality in the Indian Context	28
50	Nov. 1994	YIN Binyong <i>State Language Commission and Institute for Applied Linguistics (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)</i>	Diyi ge Lading Zimu de Hanyu Pinyin Fang’an Shi Zenyang Chansheng de? [How Was the First Romanized Spelling System for Sinitic Produced?]	7
51	Nov. 1994	HAN Kangxin <i>Institute of Archeology Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	The Study of Ancient Human Skeletons from Xinjiang, China	9 + 4 figs.
52	Nov. 1994	Warren A. Shibles <i>University of Wisconsin Whitewater</i>	<a href="#"><u>Chinese Romanization Systems: IPA Transliteration</u></a>	20
53	Nov. 1994	XU Wenkan <i>Editorial Offices of the Hanyu Da Cidian Shanghai</i>	Guanyu Tuhuoluoren de Qiyuan he Qianxi Wenti [On the Problem of the Origins and Migrations of the Tocharians]	11
54	Nov. 1994	Üjjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) <i>University of Toronto</i>	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Jegün Yogur	34
55	Nov. 1994	Üjjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) <i>University of Toronto</i>	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Dongxiang	34

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
56	Nov. 1994	Üjjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) <i>University of Toronto</i>	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Dagur	36
57	Nov. 1994	Üjjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) <i>University of Toronto</i>	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Monguor	31
58	Nov. 1994	Üjjiyediin Chuluu (Chaolu Wu) <i>University of Toronto</i>	Introduction, Grammar, and Sample Sentences for Baoan	28
59	Dec. 1994	Kevin Stuart <i>Qinghai Junior Teachers College;</i> Limusishiden <i>Qinghai Medical College Attached Hospital, Xining, Kokonor (Qinghai)</i>	China's Monguor Minority: Ethnography and Folktales	i, I, 193
60	Dec. 1994	Kevin Stuart, Li Xuewei, and Shelear <i>Qinghai Junior Teachers College, Xining, Kokonor (Qinghai)</i>	China's Dagur Minority: Society, Shamanism, and Folklore	vii, 167
61	Dec. 1994	Kevin Stuart and Li Xuewei <i>Qinghai Junior Teachers College, Xining, Kokonor (Qinghai)</i>	Tales from China's Forest Hunters: Oroqen Folktales	iv, 59
62	Dec. 1994	William C. Hannas <i>Georgetown University</i>	Reflections on the "Unity" of Spoken and Written Chinese and Academic Learning in China	5
63	Dec. 1994	Sarah M. Nelson <i>University of Denver</i>	The Development of Complexity in Prehistoric North China	17

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
64	Jan. 1995	Arne Østmoe <i>Bangkok, Thailand, and Drøbak, Norway</i>	A Germanic-Tai Linguistic Puzzle	81, 6
65	Feb. 1995	Penglin Wang <i>Chinese University of Hong Kong</i>	Indo-European Loanwords in Altaic	28
66	March 1995	ZHU Qingzhi <i>Sichuan University and Peking University</i>	Some Linguistic Evidence for Early Cultural Exchange Between China and India	7
67	April 1995	David McCraw <i>University of Hawaii</i>	Pursuing Zhuangzi as a Rhymemaster: A Snark-Hunt in Eight Fits	38
68	May 1995	Ke Peng, Yanshi Zhu <i>University of Chicago and Tokyo, Japan</i>	New Research on the Origin of Cowries Used in Ancient China	i, 26
69	Jan. 1996	Dpal-Idan-bkra-shis, Keith Slater, <i>et al.</i> <i>Qinghai, Santa Barbara, etc.</i>	Language Materials of China's Monguor Minority: Huzhu Mongghul and Minhe Mangghuer	xi, 266
70	Feb. 1996	David Utz, Xinru Liu, <i>Taylor Carman, Bryan Van Norden, and the Editor Philadelphia, Vassar, etc.</i>	Reviews VI	93
71	March 1996	Erik Zürcher <i>Leiden University</i> Seishi Karashima <i>Soka University</i> Huanming Qin <i>Tang Studies Hotline</i>	Vernacularisms in Medieval Chinese Texts	31 + 11 + 8
72	May 1996	E. Bruce Brooks <i>University of Massachusetts</i>	The Life and Mentorship of Confucius	44

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
73	June 1996	ZHANG Juan, et al., and Kevin Stuart <i>Qinghai, Inner Mongolia, Shanxi, Henan, Liaoning</i>	Blue Cloth and Pearl Deer; Yogur Folklore	iii, 76
74	Jan. 1997	David Moser <i>University of Michigan &amp; Beijing Foreign Studies University</i>	Covert Sexism in Mandarin Chinese	23
75	Feb. 1997	Haun Saussy <i>Stanford University</i>	The Prestige of Writing: Wen <sup>2</sup> , Letter, Picture, Image, Ideography	40
76	Feb. 1997	Patricia Eichenbaum Karetzky <i>Bard College</i>	The Evolution of the Symbolism of the Paradise of the Buddha of Infinite Life and Its Western Origins	28
77	Jan. 1998	Daniel Hsieh <i>Purdue University</i>	The Origin and Nature of the “Nineteen Old Poems”	49
78	Feb. 1998	Narsu <i>Inner Mongolia College of Agriculture &amp; Animal Husbandry</i> Kevin Stuart <i>Qinghai Junior Teachers’ College</i>	Practical Mongolian Sentences (With English Translation)	iii + 49 + ii + 66
79	March 1998	Dennis Grafflin <i>Bates College</i>	A Southeast Asian Voice in the Daodejing?	8
80	July 1998	Taishan Yu <i>Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	A Study of Saka History	ii + 225
81	Sept. 1998	Hera S. Walker <i>Ursinus College (Philadelphia)</i>	Indigenous or Foreign?: A Look at the Origins of the Monkey Hero Sun Wukong	iv + 110

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
82	Sept. 1998	I. S. Gurevich <i>Russian Academy of Sciences</i>	A Fragment of a pien-wen(?) Related to the Cycle “On Buddha’s Life”	15
83	Oct. 1998	Minglang Zhou <i>University of Colorado at Boulder</i>	Tense/Aspect markers in Mandarin and Xiang dialects, and their contact	20
84	Oct. 1998	Ulf Jäger <i>Gronau/Westfalen, Germany</i>	The New Old Mummies from Eastern Central Asia: Ancestors of the Tocharian Knights Depicted on the Buddhist Wallpaintings of Kucha and Turfan? Some Circumstantial Evidence	9
85	Oct. 1998	Mariko Namba Walter <i>University of New England</i>	Tokharian Buddhism in Kucha: Buddhism of Indo-European Centum Speakers in Chinese Turkestan before the 10th Century C.E.	30
86	Oct. 1998	Jidong Yang <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Siba: Bronze Age Culture of the Gansu Corridor	18
87	Nov. 1998	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Canine Conundrums: Eurasian Dog Ancestor Myths in Historical and Ethnic Perspective	74
88	Dec. 1998	Saroj Kumar Chaudhuri <i>Aichi Gakusen University</i>	Siddham in China and Japan	9, 124
89	Jan. 1999	Alvin Lin <i>Yale University</i>	Writing Taiwanese: The Development of Modern Written Taiwanese	4 + 41 + 4
90	Jan. 1999	Victor H. Mair et al	Reviews VII [including review of The Original Analects]	2, 38
91	Jan. 1999	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Phonosymbolism or Etymology: The Case of the Verb “Cop”	28

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
92	Jan. 1999	Christine Louise Lin <i>Dartmouth College</i>	The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the Advocacy of Local Autonomy	xiii + 136
93	Jan. 1999	David S. Nivison <i>Stanford University</i>	The Key to the Chronology of the Three Dynasties: The “Modern Text” Bamboo Annals	iv + 68
94	March 1999	Julie Lee Wei <i>Hoover Institute</i>	Correspondence Between the Chinese Calendar Signs and the Phoenician Alphabet	65 + 6
95	May 1999	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	A Medieval, Central Asian Buddhist Theme in a Late Ming Taoist Tale by Feng Meng-lung	27
96	June 1999	E. Bruce Brooks <i>University of Massachusetts</i>	Alexandrian Motifs in Chinese Texts	14
97	Dec. 1999	LI Shuicheng <i>Peking University</i>	Sino-Western Contact in the Second Millennium BC	iv, 29
98	Jan. 2000	Peter Daniels, Daniel Boucher, and other authors	Reviews VIII	108
99	Feb. 2000	Anthony Barbieri-Low <i>Princeton University</i>	Wheeled Vehicles in the Chinese Bronze Age (c. 2000-741 BC)	v, 98 + 5 color plates
100	Feb. 2000	Wayne Alt <i>Community College of Baltimore County (Essex)</i>	Zhuangzi, Mysticism, and the Rejection of Distinctions	29
101	March 2000	C. Michele Thompson <i>South Connecticut State University</i>	The Viêt Peoples and the Origins of Nom	71, 1

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
102	March 2000	Theresa Jen <i>Bryn Mawr College</i> Ping Xu <i>Baruch College</i>	Penless Chinese Character Reproduction	15
103	June 2000	Carrie E. Reid <i>Middlebury College</i>	Early Chinese Tattoo	52
104	July 2000	David W. Pankenier <i>Lehigh University</i>	Popular Astrology and Border Affairs in Early China	19 + 1 color plate
105	Aug. 2000	Anne Birrell <i>Cambridge University</i>	Postmodernist Theory in Recent Studies of Chinese Literature	31
106	Sept. 2000	Yu Taishan <i>Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	A Hypothesis about the Sources of the Sai Tribes	i, 3, 200
107	Sept. 2000	Jacques deLisle, Adelheid E. Krohne, and the editor	Reviews IX	148 + map
108	Sept. 2000	Ruth H. Chang <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Understanding <i>Di</i> and <i>Tian</i> : Deity and Heaven From Shang to Tang	vii, 54
109	Oct. 2000	Conán Dean Carey <i>Stanford University</i>	In Hell the One without Sin is Lord	ii, 60
110	Oct. 2000	Toh Hoong Teik <i>Harvard University</i>	Shaykh 'Alam: The Emperor of Early Sixteenth-Century China	20
111	Nov. 2000	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	The Need for a New Era	10
112	July 2001	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Notes on the Anau Inscription	xi, 93

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
113	Aug. 2001	Ray Collins <i>Chepachet, RI</i> David Kerr <i>Melbourne, FL</i>	Etymology of the Word “Macrobiotic:s” and Its Use in Modern Chinese Scholarship	18
114	March 2002	Ramnath Subbaraman <i>University of Chicago</i>	Beyond the Question of the Monkey Imposter: Indian Influence on the Chinese Novel, <i>The Journey to the West</i>	35
115	April 2002	ZHOU Jixu <i>Sichuan Normal University</i>	Correspondences of Basic Words Between Old Chinese and Proto-Indo-European	8
116	May 2002	LIU Yongquan <i>Institute of Linguistics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	On the Problem of Chinese Lettered Words	13
117	May 2002	SHANG Wei <i>Columbia University</i>	<i>Baihua, Guanhua, Fangyan</i> and the May Fourth Reading of <i>Rulin Waishi</i>	10
118	June 2002	Justine T. Snow <i>Port Townsend, WA</i>	Evidence for the Indo-European Origin of Two Ancient Chinese Deities	ii, 75, 1 color, 1 b-w print
119	July 2002	WU Zhen <i>Xinjiang Museum, Ürümchi</i>	“Hu” Non-Chinese as They Appear in the Materials from the Astana Graveyard at Turfan	21, 5 figs.
120	July 2002	Anne Birrell <i>University of Cambridge, Clare Hall</i>	Female-Gendered Myth in the <i>Classic of Mountains and Seas</i>	47
121	July 2002	Mark Edward Lewis <i>Stanford University</i>	Dicing and Divination in Early China	22, 7 figs.

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
122	July 2002	Julie Wilensky <i>Yale Univesity</i>	The Magical <i>Kunlun</i> and “Devil Slaves”: Chinese Perceptions of Dark-skinned People and Africa before 1500	51, 3 figs.
123	Aug. 2002	Paul R. Goldin and the editor	Reviews X	30
124	August 2002	Fredrik T. Hiebert <i>University of Pennsylvania</i> John Colarusso <i>McMaster University</i>	The Context of the Anau Seal  Remarks on the Anau and Niyä Seals	1-34  35-47
125	July 2003	ZHOU Jixu <i>Sichuan Normal University</i> <i>Shanghai Normal University</i>	Correspondences of Cultural Words between Old Chinese and Proto-Indo-European	19
126	Aug. 2003	Tim Miller <i>University of Washington</i>	A Southern Min Word in the <i>Tsu-t’ang chi</i>	14
127	Oct. 2003	Sundeep S. Jhutti <i>Petaluma, California</i>	The Getes	125, 8 color plates
128	Nov. 2003	Yinpo Tschang <i>New York City</i>	On Proto-Shang	18
129	Dec. 2003	Michael Witzel <i>Harvard University</i>	Linguistic Evidence for Cultural Exchange in Prehistoric Western Central Asia	70
130	Feb. 2004	Bede Fahey <i>Fort St. John, British Columbia</i>	Mayan: A Sino-Tibetan Language? A Comparative Study	61

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
131	March 2004	Taishan Yu <i>Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	A History of the Relationship between the Western and Eastern Han, Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties and the Western Regions	1, 3, 352
132	April 2004	Kim Hayes <i>Sydney</i>	On the Presence of Non-Chinese at Anyang	11
133	April 2004	John L. Sorenson <i>Brigham Young University</i> Carl L. Johannessen <i>University of Oregon</i>	<i>Scientific Evidence for Pre-Columbian Transoceanic Voyages</i> CD-ROM	48, 166, 19, 15 plates
134	May 2004	Xieyan Hinch <i>Neumädewitz, Germany</i>	Two Steps Toward Digraphia in China	i, 22
135	May 2004	John J. Emerson <i>Portland, Oregon</i>	<i>The Secret History of the Mongols</i> and Western Literature	21
136	May 2004	Serge Papillon <i>Mouvoux, France and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia</i>	Influences tokhariennes sur la mythologie chinoise	47
137	June 2004	Hoong Teik Toh <i>Harvard University</i>	Some Classical Malay Materials for the Study of the Chinese Novel <i>Journey to the West</i>	64
138	June 2004	Julie Lee Wei <i>San Jose and London</i>	Dogs and Cats: Lessons from Learning Chinese	17
139	June 2004	Taishan Yu <i>Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	A Hypothesis on the Origin of the Yu State	20
140	June 2004	Yinpo Tschang <i>New York City</i>	Shih and Zong: Social Organization in Bronze Age China	28
141	July 2004	Yinpo Tschang <i>New York City</i>	Chaos in Heaven: On the Calendars of Preclassical China	30

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
142	July 2004	Katheryn Linduff, ed. <i>University of Pittsburgh</i>	<i>Silk Road Exchange in China</i>	64
143	July 2004	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Sleep in <i>Dream</i> : Soporific Responses to Depression in <i>Story of the Stone</i>	99
144	July 2004	RONG Xinjiang <i>Peking University</i>	Land Route or Sea Route? Commentary on the Study of the Paths of Transmission and Areas in which Buddhism Was Disseminated during the Han Period	32
145	Aug. 2004	the editor	Reviews XI	2, 41
146	Feb. 2005	Hoong Teik Toh <i>Academia Sinica</i>	The - <i>yu</i> Ending in Xiongnu, Xianbei, and Gaoju Onomastica	24
147	March 2005	Hoong Teik Toh <i>Academia Sinica</i>	Ch. <i>Qiong</i> ~ Tib. Khyung; Taoism ~ Bonpo -- Some Questions Related to Early Ethno-Religious History in Sichuan	18
148	April 2005	Lucas Christopoulos <i>Beijing Sports University</i>	Le gréco-bouddhisme et l'art du poing en Chine	52
149	May 2005	Kimberly S. Te Winkle <i>University College, London</i>	A Sacred Trinity: God, Mountain, and Bird: Cultic Practices of the Bronze Age Chengdu Plain	ii, 103 (41 in color)
150	May 2005	Dolkun Kamberi <i>Washington, DC</i>	Uyghurs and Uyghur Identity	44
151	June 2005	Jane Jia SI <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	The Genealogy of Dictionaries: Producers, Literary Audience, and the Circulation of English Texts in the Treaty Port of Shanghai	44, 4 tables

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
152	June 2005	Denis Mair <i>Seattle</i>	The Dance of Qian and Kun in the <i>Zhouyi</i>	13, 2 figs.
153	July 2005	Alan Piper <i>London (UK)</i>	The Mysterious Origins of the Word “Marihuana”	17
154	July 2005	Serge Papillon <i>Belfort, France</i>	<i>Mythologie sino-européenne</i>	174, 1 plate
155	July 2005	Denis Mair <i>Seattle</i>	Janus-Like Concepts in the <i>Li</i> and <i>Kun</i> Trigrams	8
156	July 2005	Abolqasem Esmailpour <i>Shahid Beheshti</i> <i>University, Tehran</i>	<i>Manichean Gnosis and Creation</i>	157
157	Aug. 2005	Ralph D. Sawyer <i>Independent Scholar</i>	Paradoxical Coexistence of Prognostication and Warfare	13
158	Aug. 2005	Mark Edward Lewis <i>Stanford University</i>	Writings on Warfare Found in Ancient Chinese Tombs	15
159	Aug. 2005	Jens Østergaard Petersen <i>University of Copenhagen</i>	The <i>Zuozhuan</i> Account of the Death of King Zhao of Chu and Its Sources	47
160	Sept. 2005	Matteo Compareti <i>Venice</i>	Literary Evidence for the Identification of Some Common Scenes in Han Funerary Art	14
161	Sept. 2005	Julie Lee Wei <i>London</i>	The Names of the <i>Yi Jing</i> Trigrams: An Inquiry into Their Linguistic Origins	18
162	Sept. 2005	Julie Lee Wei <i>London</i>	Counting and Knotting: Correspondences between Old Chinese and Indo-European	71, map

Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
163	Oct. 2005	Julie Lee Wei <i>London</i>	Huangdi and Huntun (the Yellow Emperor and Wonton): A New Hypothesis on Some Figures in Chinese Mythology	44
164	Oct. 2005	Julie Lee Wei <i>London</i>	Shang and Zhou: An Inquiry into the Linguistic Origins of Two Dynastic Names	62
165	Oct. 2005	Julie Lee Wei <i>London</i>	DAO and DE: An Inquiry into the Linguistic Origins of Some Terms in Chinese Philosophy and Morality	51
166	Nov. 2005	Julie Lee Wei <i>London</i> Hodong Kim <i>Seoul National University</i> and David Selvia and the Editor <i>both of the University of Pennsylvania</i>	Reviews XII	i, 63
167	Dec. 2005	ZHOU Jixu <i>Sichuan Normal University</i>	Old Chinese '帝*tees' and Proto-Indo-European “*deus”: Similarity in Religious Ideas and a Common Source in Linguistics	17
168	Dec. 2005	Judith A. Lerner <i>New York City</i>	Aspects of Assimilation: the Funerary Practices and Furnishings of Central Asians in China	51, v, 9 plates
169	Jan. 2006	Victor H. Mair <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Conversion Tables for the Three-Volume Edition of the <i>Hanyu Da Cidian</i>	i, 284
170	Feb. 2006	Amber R. Woodward <i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	Learning English, Losing Face, and Taking Over: The Method (or Madness) of Li Yang and His Crazy English	18

---

## Previous Issues, *cont.*

Number	Date	Author	Title	Pages
<p>Beginning with issue no. 171, <i>Sino-Platonic Papers</i> will be published electronically on the Web. Issues from no. 1 to no. 170, however, will continue to be sold as paper copies until our stock runs out, after which they too will be made available on the Web. For prices of paper copies, see the catalog at <a href="http://www.sino-platonic.org">www.sino-platonic.org</a></p>				
171	June 2006	John DeFrancis <i>University of Hawaii</i>	<a href="#"><u>The Prospects for Chinese Writing Reform</u></a>	26, 3 figs.
172	Aug. 2006	Deborah Beaser	<a href="#"><u>The Outlook for Taiwanese Language Preservation</u></a>	18
173	Oct. 2006	Taishan Yu <i>Chinese Academy of Social Sciences</i>	<a href="#"><u>A Study of the History of the Relationship Between the Western and Eastern Han, Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties and the Western Regions</u></a>	167
174	Nov. 2006	Mariko Namba Walter	<a href="#"><u>Sogdians and Buddhism</u></a>	65
175	Dec. 2006	Zhou Jixu <i>Center for East Asian Studies, University of Pennsylvania; Chinese Department, Sichuan Normal University</i>	<a href="#"><u>The Rise of Agricultural Civilization in China: The Disparity between Archeological Discovery and the Documentary Record and Its Explanation</u></a>	38

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