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1582), the author of the *Siyi guangji* who interviewed a Siamese envoy to complete the written sources.

Chapters 7-9 (pp. 86-168) constitute three case studies relating to Siam, Malacca and Portugal. The way in which the seven works presented these entities geographically and historically, as well as their diplomatic, tributary, and even commercial links with China, their customs, their productions, and their foreign policy, and finally the maritime routes linking them to the Ming Empire (sometimes presented in great detail, see Figure 13, p. 17), is analyzed here in a comparative manner. In some cases, the authors give an overall assessment (mitigated for Siam, often judged too bellicose towards its neighbours, good for Malacca and rather negative for Portugal).¹⁸

Although these world histories have many differences, they share some commonalities as well. While the authors have made an effort to enrich their documentation, some even taking the trouble to list their sources, they do not, strictly speaking, criticize them and simply accumulate them in their own work. Moreover, they remain attached to the traditional worldview according to which foreigners must bring tribute to the glorious Ming. Their worldview is therefore selective, to the extent that they sometimes deliberately ignore facts; for example, some authors refuse to give information about the Portuguese, whose presence on the southern coasts threatens the established order. However, the author of the *Siyi guangji*, as well as those of the *Fangyu shenglüe* and the *Huangming xiangxu lu* are more open and accept reality. These are the main lines drawn by the author.

Overall, these texts reveal the world view of a group of scholars who had never crossed borders but who had certain intellectual and even kinship links between them. This overall vision of the Asian maritime regions would undoubtedly benefit from being considered in relation to that (or those) emerging from contemporary Portuguese narratives. Moreover, if we move from a macro view of maritime Asia to a micro view of the various “maritime countries”, it must be said that the notes contained in these works are very rich in original historical details, which would benefit from being more widely used by historians working on South-East Asia in general and Insulindia in particular. In short, this study by Papelitzky opens the way to new and promising research.

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Gregor Benton 班國瑞, Huimei Zhang 張慧梅, Hong Liu 劉宏 (Ed.), *Chinese Migrants Write Home / 二十世紀華人移民書信選注. A Dual-Language Anthology of Twentieth-Century Family Letters*, Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co, 2020, 334 p. Numerous plates. ISBN 9789813274921

This book is a collection of letters in Chinese covering the period 1902-1980s and their English translations. These letters come from emigrants who lived in Southeast Asia (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines) as well as in the United States and Canada, but also from family members who remained in China. They come from several

¹⁸. Under the Ming, the rumor was that the Portuguese ate children, and they were considered to be very violent, well-equipped militarily, and therefore dangerous.

institutions such as: the Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA), the City of Vancouver Archives, Shantou Qiaopi Museum 汕頭僑批博物館 (Guangdong, founded in 2004), and the National Library in Singapore. This correspondence is distributed under eleven thematic headings corresponding to eleven chapters: Reasons for Migrating, Immigration Procedures, Migrant' Life Overseas, Migrant Dependents' Lives in China, Distribution of Remittances, Household Matters, Economic Issues and Politics, Education, Society, Family Values, New Ideas, and Advice to Family Members, and Others Issues.

To understand the purpose of this book it is important to know that it is the result of a four-year research project launched in Singapore in 2013 by the editors, following their participation in an international symposium held in China, on remittances accompanied by letters (*qiaopi* 僑批) from emigrants to their families in southern China. This project was entitled "*Qiaopi* and Changing Memories of the Homeland: Emigrants' Letters, Family Ties, and Transnational Chinese Networks."¹⁹ It was funded by the Singapore Ministry of Education and Nanyang Technological University. The term *qiaopi*, which is said to date from the 1920s, is only known in a certain milieu. *Qiao* stands for *huaqiao*; *pi* has been the subject of much debate. *Qiaopi* is the equivalent of *huaqiao de jia shu* 华侨的家书 ou "letters from overseas Chinese to their families." The responses to the *qiaopi* are called *hui pi* 回批.

Gregor Benton and Hong Liu have previously published a book that is a good study of the nature of this *qiaopi* trade and its development.²⁰ The reader of the anthology unfamiliar with this money transfer system will benefit from reading this study first. Indeed, the money transfers between the Chinese established in Southeast Asia and their families in Southern China go back a long way, but are not or hardly documented. For example, in the case of the Malacca Captain Li Weijing 李為經 (1614-1688), it is known from a manuscript genealogy that he sent a sum of money to his family in Xiamen for the construction of an ancestral temple on that island. At a time that remains uncertain, at least during the reign of Qianlong (1736-1795), people specialised in this type of trade. They collected the money in Southeast Asia and went to China in order to give it to the people concerned. They were known as *shuike* 水客 or "water guest."

Before the establishment of Western-style Chinese banks in Southeast Asia, merchants specialized in this type of trade and established shops called *piju* 批局 or "remittance shop." With the establishment of these shops, transfers were made in a standardised form: an envelope including the sum of money and an accompanying letter. The envelope itself contained the name of the recipient or a designation in a central column, the address in the right column, and the amount of money sent, the name of the sender and his country of residence in the left column. The accompanying letters were, depending on the educational level of the persons concerned, written by themselves or by a public writer. The editors do not seem to have considered this question, nevertheless important, since the style, one might think, would differ if the letter were written by a third person, even if some emigrants could also use correspondence manuals.²¹

19. The Qiaopi Project was formally registered under UNESCO's Memory of the World Program.

20. Gregor Benton, Hong Liu, *Dear China. Emigrant Letters and Remittances, 1820-1980*, Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018.

21. We found in Iquitos (Peru) the first volume of a textbook that dated from the late Qing (1st

To return to the present volume, it aims to highlight the social content of this correspondence which, through the ages, reveals the suffering and financial problems of those who have remained in the country, but also of those who left it and were having difficulty succeeding in their migratory project. On both sides, the weight of financial hardships is felt and, in the background, that of the political situation. The editors did not say how they selected the letters, but one can think that the choices were quite limited. Indeed, as far as Southeast Asia is concerned, there are very few letters from the very beginning of the century, the majority of which do not go back beyond the years 1920-1930.

Editing and translating the various letters was a very difficult task because of the use of many local expressions which could not have been understood without the help of Prof. Liu Jin 劉進, from Wuyi University 五邑大學. We will stop for a moment at the oldest one for Southeast Asia (pp. 10-12) and make a comment. It dates from 1902 and was written by an emigrant in the Philippines to a relative in Vancouver to recounts the difficulties he had encountered since leaving his country, and to borrow money. The editors have omitted the name of the Philippine port transcribed (in Cantonese?) 尾利打埠 where he arrived (p. 10), yet this is important to the understanding of the letter. The transcription is not common. According to Teresita Ang, Go Bon Juan and Lyonel Ty, it is very likely a rendering of Manito, a port located in the province of Albay which produces a lot of abaca. The author of the letter notes that from time to time he earns a living by cutting abaca stalks in the fields, and not hemp as in the translation. The confusion arises from the fact that the author uses the expression of *ma* 麻 for *jiaoma* 蕉麻.

This is the first bilingual English-Chinese collection of its kind, and the editors are to be congratulated for opening a new genre of study. In the Chinese world, similar researches have already appeared. We mention only two: *Qiaopi gushi* 僑批故事 “Stories from Overseas Letters” published in 2014 by the Provincial Archives of Guangdong 廣東檔案館 in the Guangdong Memory Series, *Jiyi xilie congshu* 廣東記憶系列叢書; *Qiaopili de zhonghua qing* 僑批裡的中華情, “Love for China in Overseas Letters” by Singaporean author Rongzi 蓉子 published in 2018 in Guangzhou by Huacheng chubanshe.

Claudine Salmon

Pieter Nicolaas Kuiper, *The Early Dutch Sinologists. A Study of their Training in Holland and China and their Functions in the Netherlands Indies (1854-1900)*, PhD Thesis, Leiden University, The Netherlands, 2015, 2 vols., 1035 pages, 45 illustrations, 19 appendices, 4 indexes. ISBN/EAN: 978-90-71256-45-5

P. N. Kuiper's thesis has the great merit of unveiling the singularity of the first forty-odd years of Dutch Sinology, which unlike that of other European countries was not directed towards China, but to the management of the Chinese communities in the

ed. 1881, re-engraved in Foshan 佛山, Guangdong, 1903). It was titled: *You xue xinza you* 幼学信札 “The Young Learn to Write Letters”.