China Perspectives

2015/4 | 2015
Shaping the Chinese Internet

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London, Routledge, 2013, 264 pp.

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Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/chinaperspectives/6880>

DOI: 10.4000/chinaperspectives.6880

ISSN: 1996-4617

Publisher

Centre d'étude français sur la Chine contemporaine

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 December 2015

Number of pages: 77-78

ISSN: 2070-3449

Electronic reference

Yves Russell, « Paul Morris, Naoko Shimazu, and Edward Vickers (eds.), *Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia: Identity Politics, Schooling and Popular Culture*, », *China Perspectives* [Online], 2015/4 | 2015, Online since 01 January 2017, connection on 24 September 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/chinaperspectives/6880> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.6880>

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Imagining Japan in Post-war East Asia: Identity Politics, Schooling and Popular Culture,
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YVES RUSSELL

Celebrations marking 70 years since Japan's capitulation in the summer of 1945, featuring a major military parade organised for the occasion in China, have revealed the extent to which memories of the war with the Japanese archipelago pose challenges of varying magnitude among East Asian countries. While Japan's image as an aggressor is often invoked by the governments of neighbouring countries, especially in the context of current territorial disputes, it is not the only image they use and/or is in vogue among people in these countries.

Historians and specialists in education at the University of London, Paul Morris, Naoko Shimazu, and Edward Vickers (the latter being a noted expert on education in Asia and currently affiliated with Kyushu University in Japan) have put together 11 contributions shedding light on changes in the way Japan is represented in different countries and territories in East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, the Philippines, and Malaysia). The book consists of two main parts: the first deals with the way in which Japan is represented in "popular culture and state propaganda" and the second focuses on representations of Japan in school (mainly history) textbooks, deemed "official discourse." An epilogue by Shi Guopeng, who teaches history in an elite Beijing school, concludes these studies from a different perspective with a reflection on the trilateral encounters among history teachers from China, Japan, and South Korea, in which he took part. His bitter account echoes that of Soon-Won Park⁽¹⁾ regarding a common textbook project of the three countries, *A History that Opens the Future*. The two authors conclude that without a profound change in the national political and institutional situations, the transmission of a certain image of Japan by the media or teaching will always be subject to the interests of the authorities in place.

The book's aim is to examine the ways in which representations of Japan as an imagined "Other" may or may not serve in moulding national identities in the region. The historical approach used here helps discern the changes and the political, institutional and cultural reasons behind the evolution in Japan's image in the countries studied. In the book's introduction, the editors identify four models of the Japanese "Other": the "normative Other," or the model to be followed; the "dominant Other," or enemy/counter-model Other; that of "alternative Other," often in the interplay of triangular relations as with China and Taiwan; and that of "distant Other," with little significance in the construction of national identity.

Starting with the observation that Japan's image is strongly linked to its role in the Second World War, more than half of the book's chapters deal with representations of Japanese occupation or memories of the conflict with the archipelago. Kinnia Yau Shuk-ting (Chapter 4), analysing "good

Japanese in Chinese (Sino-Japanese) war films," shows how a more contrasted vision of Japanese enemies has emerged, mainly since the 1990s. While the bloodthirsty and violent Japanese "demon" (*guizi*) image holds sway in dominant media, the Japanese soldier's unilateral image has been softened and toned down in films seeking more international audiences, at the same time transmitting the image of a more indulgent China capable of empathy. Chapter 5, by Karl Ian Uy Cheng Chua, focuses on the Philippines, where the image of Japanese soldiers in comic books has evolved from a Manichean vision (heroic Filipino guerrilla seeing off Japanese troublemakers) towards a more contrasting one when issues linked to reparations were resolved and when issues of official corruption, economic growth, and civil dissent arose. Finally, from the 1970s, echoing the previous chapter's precedent, there appeared the odd Filipino traitor and a good Japanese soldier that the former aggressor country's economic development reinforced. After these two positive changes in Japan's image comes an opposing trajectory in South Korea. The fine and fascinating analysis (Chapter 6 by Jung-sun N. Han) of the fate of the Japanese forces' former headquarters finally destroyed in 1995 after having served as the Korean government's offices and later a museum, helps in understanding the political, architectural, and also symbolic (such as geomancy) issues surrounding the Japanese occupation.

In Part II, four of the six chapters examine the ways in which the occupation and the war with Japan are dealt with in school textbooks in China (Caroline Rose), Malaysia (Helen Ting), Singapore (Khatera Khamsi and Christine Han), and the Philippines (Mark Maca and Paul Morris). In China, according to Rose, despite notable variations among different editions, reducing the treatment of the war in history textbooks throughout programmes has led to proportionally highlighting war atrocities, presenting the Japanese as the dominant "Extreme Other." This unity of tone in the Chinese centralised state is not to be found in Malaysia (Chapter 10), where there is no national memory of Japanese occupation but collective memories linked to ethnic groups. In the Philippines (Chapter 12), the state's weak control and poor quality of school textbooks have prevented the emergence of a coherent account leading to the creation of a national identity sentiment; on the other hand, the account of Japanese occupation has merely served to de-dramatize Spanish and American colonisations. In Singapore (Chapter 11), the idealised image of Japan is used ambivalently: at once enemy and model in the textbooks, but model of governance for the authorities in power.

Among contributions not specifically devoted to Japan's aggressor image, that of Simon Avenell (Chapter 2) analyses the manner in which the Singapore government has built an image of Japan and uses it through the "Learn from Japan" campaign launched in the late 1970s. The campaign's impact on Japan's image among the people may not be clear, but Avenell says: "More significant in the long term (...) was the Learn from Japan campaign's ideological utility in teaching people about being productive, patriotic, and compliant Singaporeans and in legitimizing the persistence of authoritarian governance and neoliberal developmentalist economics. 'Japan' was a useful tool for Singaporean leaders in the formulation of strategies to short-circuit labour militancy and political dissent (...)" (p. 45). Taiwan of the 1990s likewise idealised a Japan far from the social reality on the ground, an image magnified in manga comics and deemed "popular culture." There is a triangular relationship with the United States and China, particularly dealt with

1. Soon-Won Park, "A History that Opens the Future," in Gi-Wook Shin, Daniel C. Sneider (eds.), *History Textbooks and the Wars in Asia*, New York, Routledge, 2011, 312 pp.

by Alisa Jones (Chapter 9). Her brilliant analysis of the manner in which Taiwanese history textbooks have long treated the island's relations with Japan and the Chinese mainland shows how the construction of the Taiwanese identity has necessitated adjustments and rearrangements in the statuses of otherness of the two neighbours, the PRC gradually taking Japan's place as the dominant "Other." Her analysis is echoed by that of Paul Morris and Edward Vickers regarding Hong Kong. The situation in the Special Administrative Region (SAR) is somewhat of an inverse mirror image of that in Taiwan, as the account on Japan is obliged to be based on the mainland's and to serve national unity.

The various chapters of this volume present an interesting and diversified study of the instrumentalisation of different gradations of otherness in the process of political legitimisation or of identity building. Despite a focus on the Japanese occupation adding a touch of bias, the situation seems rather disquieting for Japan, which suffers from a mostly negative image, especially among its immediate neighbours, China and South Korea. The situation seems better in countries and territories where state legitimacy or policies may rely on a supposed Japanese model or where other countries may fill the role of the dominant "Other" or enemy.

■ Translated by N. Jayaram.

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Yu Zhejun,
Shenming yu shimin. Minguo
shiqi Shanghai diqu yingshen
saihui yanjiu (Deities and City
Dwellers: Research on Popular
Processions in Shanghai during
the Republican Era), Shanghai,
Shanghai Joint Publishing Company,
2014, 312 pp.

BENOÎT VERMANDER

This work discusses the make-up of civil society in Shanghai in the time of the Republic of China and the role played in this process by popular religion. The importance of this question clearly goes beyond mere historical interest, which is one of the reasons why this excellent study deserves attention.

Focusing first on the title, two points should be highlighted. The first is, of course, the use of the Chinese term *shimin* 市民 which, on the author's own admission, retains a certain vagueness in Chinese, and which can be translated indiscriminately today as "citizen" or "city dweller"; the doctoral thesis behind this work, which was written in German, uses the term *Bürger*, which does little to clarify the translation to be favoured. At this point, we can look to Rousseau's admonition: "Most people take a town for a city and a *bourgeois* for a citizen. They do not know that although the houses make the town, it is the citizens that make the city." Nevertheless, historically, the Chinese term *shimin* originally referred to "civil" and "citizen": *bürgerliche Gesellschaft*, the term introduced into modern political

thinking by Hegel, is translated in Marxist texts as *shimin shehui*. However, when referring to "civil society," the term *gongmin shehui* is today used most frequently, at least in mainland China, where the expression refers to "public affairs," insofar as civil society, in the sense attributed to it in this case, is that which participates, of its own accord, in public affairs. In any case, in the work relevant to us here, it is "citizens" – and those of the Chinese city at the peak of "modernity" – that are potentially the actors of a civil society in gestation. It therefore appears to be very difficult to separate the two connotations of the term.

The second point that needs highlighting relates to the expression *ying-shen saihui* 迎神賽會. This refers to the processions in which the statue of a god is carried, thus marking its territory, and it is therefore the inhabitants of this territory who welcome the deity's visit. The author correctly notes that although the character *sai* 賽 has today taken on the meaning, above all, of competition, the expression *saishen* 賽神 alludes to an offering or thanksgiving sacrifice (p. 60). The type of processions referred to here concerns local deities, responsible for a territory; the departure from a given territory (a temple or hall) and the journey through a marked space at fixed times of the year form the heart of the ritual in question. It is the inhabitants of the given territory, rather than the clerics, who organise and participate in the ritual.

The work opens along the lines of Paul Katz, who suggested that studying civil society and the formation of a public space in China cannot disregard the study of popular religion (see *Demon Hords and Burning Boats: The Cult of Marshall Wen in Late Imperial Chekiang*, a line of analysis rejected by Yves Chevrier, for example, for whom the emergence of civil society cannot be reduced to any independent manifestation of the social with regard to the political). Kenneth Dean's studies of ritual spaces and civil society are also recalled a little later in the work.

The first part, which probably holds less interest for the foreign reader, focuses on the Western concept of civil society and on its applicability (or not) to the Chinese context. Concerning this final point, the studies of Rowe, Rankin, and Wakeman are described in detail. Although the question remains open as to the possibility, extent, and mode of China's adoption of the Western model of civil society, the author defends the heuristic value of this model to account for societal changes in China. Based on these preliminary reviews, Yu Zhejun elaborates the theory that popular religion is the favoured mode of self-organisation in Chinese society, demonstrated above all by the way in which festivals and temples are managed and overseen (p. 56).

This theory introduces the second part, which starts with a history of popular processions, the substance of which is evoked above. Their enactment is then situated in the context of Shanghai in the time of the Republic of China, with its particularities both geographical (some of these processions take place on waterways) and legal/political (in particular a thorough review of relations between the state and religions). The choreography of the procession follows fairly general rules (opening rites, dances, interventions by "penitents," and transportation of the palanquin or palanquins of the gods). During the period in question (1912-1949), approximately 200 processions took place each year in the territories that today constitute Shanghai (pp. 107-121). A substantial chapter is given over to the three annual processions organised from the temple of the god of walls and moats (*chenghuangmiao*) in the old city of Shanghai. The city god, worship of whom originated with the gods of the land, was incorporated into state institutions and sacrifices when the founder of the Ming dynasty, Taizu (r. 1368-1399), made the creation of a temple dedicated to him compul-