

for dialogue may remain a distant possibility but the Rohingya, now hosted in an area of Bangladesh that is earmarked as an export processing zone (p. 233), will need some form of long term conflict resolution beyond being taken to a remote island (Bhashanchar) (p. 238). Possible durable solutions listed in order of priority from post-fieldwork research are repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation.

The term ‘crisis’ is used in the title of the book as a result of the passionately felt advocacy from the Rohingya diaspora around the now acknowledged genocide. However, the term ‘conflict’ within the book describes what the authors call a ‘systematic pogrom’ against the Rohingya population since the Ne Win coup d’état of 1962, six decades earlier. In Chapter 7, the authors point out that the Rohingya conflict is already protracted but became a ‘crisis’ in 2017 with the largest exodus of Rohingya from Myanmar to date. A Global Compact on Refugees is mentioned, with a worrying account of the creation of a ‘safe zone’ inside Rakhine State, under UN supervision but with a counter suggestion that this would be, under current conditions, tantamount to returning the Rohingya to ‘concentration camps’ (pp. 249–250).

The conclusion asks what could and should be done to resolve the conflict. The authors also outline how signs of the impending genocide were ignored by the international community. Summaries of each chapter then lead to a short conclusion that draws parallels with Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Rohingya conflict is already protracted and will require long term coordinated effort across internal and external actors to begin any form of the inclusive reconciliation process and/or engagement in peacebuilding dialogues. As the authors outline, for the Rohingya living in eight countries outside Rakhine State, such long-term conflict transformative initiatives (p. 274) cannot come soon enough.

This review requires a note on sources and References. This text draws on extensive, eclectic and temporally expansive sources. Anything to do with Burma/Myanmar requires verification of the accuracy of sources and this is never an easy task. Understandably, on occasion, details of sources have been left out to avoid repercussions to those providing quotes and detail. This is also a context wherein stated facts presented are often either accepted or deeply contested. A minor suggestion for any future edition would be greater attention to sources in the body of the text, the avoidance of secondary sources and reference to the most authoritative sources available. At times the authors lean on narratives such as dependency (p. 80) uncritically, rely on emotive terms and repeat key facts a little too much. However, these are minor distractions from a text which is comprehensive, full of historical detail and should be read by anyone involved in bringing about change with and for the Rohingya.

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Reclaiming the Wilderness: Contemporary Dynamics of the Yiguandao

By Sébastien Billioud. Oxford University Press, 2020. 352 pages. Hardback, £65.00, ISBN: 9780197529133

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Sebastien Billioud’s new monograph seeks to explore the dynamics of one of the fastest-growing religious movements in Asia. Yet, it is also part of the author’s greater research endeavor to tackle the fate of Confucianism in modern and contemporary Chinese societies, a topic he studied even before the

publication of his book (Billioud 2012) on the new Confucian moral philosophy of Mou Zongsan 牟宗三 (1909–1995), who was arguably one of the most important Chinese philosophers in the twentieth century. In the course of his scholarly itinerary, Billioud then turned from intellectual history to an ethnographical approach in order to explore the popular revival of Confucian teachings in contemporary Chinese societies, ranging from educational projects and small study groups to ritual festivals and political engagements (Billioud and Thoraval 2015). Hence, it is only natural that his work turns toward the religious expressions of China’s Confucian legacy. One of the most influential and quantitatively speaking most widespread ones is Yiguandao (“The Way of Pervading Unity”) – a salvationist movement that emerged as an autonomous religious organization in the early twentieth century, but which is deeply rooted in late imperial Chinese sectarianism and emphasizes the unity of the traditional Three Teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism.

The research that led to this publication chiefly comprises of ethnographic fieldwork, most of which was conducted over the course of almost a decade and centered on Fayi Chongde 發一崇德, which is one of the largest and most influential Yiguandao divisions. Yet, because Yiguandao is a compartmental and relatively heterogeneous religious phenomenon that consists of more than twenty autonomous divisions and branches, the author rightfully admits that he does not aim to provide general explanations about Yiguandao as a whole outside the context where his research was conducted (p. 29). The fieldwork itself took place in Hong Kong, but also, to a lesser extent, in Taiwan, the People’s Republic of China (PRC), and in Paris.

The book is structured in four parts – and altogether eight chapters – that seek to track some of the most interesting dynamics of Yiguandao over the past decades. They are framed by a lengthy introduction and an epilogue, the first of which does not merely outline the structure of the book and its basic questions, but also sets the stage for readers who are not familiar with Yiguandao by providing a very readable and concise lead-in to the sect’s history and development, as well as to its foundational teachings, practices, and organizational peculiarities.

Part 1 deals with individual practitioners, their religious lives, and how specific self-cultivation regimens and regular training activities serve not only individual aims of religious self-actualization, but also the expansionary dynamic of the entire movement. This important argument unfolds in Chapter 1, which describes the ideal-type committed Yiguandao practitioner whom Billioud calls “missionary-adepts:” through a sophisticated system of faith-building activities that comprises seminars, ritual practices, and other training activities at the temple, neophytes tend to increase their involvement in the group and finally to evolve into well-advanced religious practitioners who – ideally – are vegetarians and clearly committed to promote the sect’s teachings in society (pp. 49–50). Hence, from the viewpoint of these practitioners, proselytization is always a key initiative. Building on the Weberian framework of the “confirmation” of one’s faith, which is crucial in his famous Protestant ethic thesis, Chapter 2 posits that there are two modes of confirmation at work in Yiguandao: one – and basically more crucial – an inner mode that aims to confirm religious convictions to be among the saved ones through the obvious results of individual missionary activities among family, friends, co-workers, and others; and one outer mode of lesser but complementary importance that relates to the feeling of belonging to a global movement and, as in his case study, which sees spirit-written revelations by deities and deceased sect elders as reinforcing missionary-adepts’ beliefs. Part 1 thus provides theoretically informed explanations of why many committed members devote their entire private and business lives to the promotion of the Dao that go beyond rather vague references to Yiguandao’s eschatological messages, which, by the way, are not at all shared equally by all practitioners.

Part 2 focuses on yet another classical Weberian issue, the production and routinization of Charisma. By looking at the life of paramount leader Zhang Tianran 張天然 (1889–1947), Chapter 3 engages in a historical–critical reading of hagiographic material but also other, sometimes even hostile, sources in order to analyze how the patriarch is described, remembered, and imagined, and, perhaps even more importantly, how his charisma is transmitted and channeled posthumously. Billioud argues that specifically his hybrid identity as “flesh-and-blood-patriarch” (p. 116) on the one hand and incarnation of the eccentric deified Song period (960–1279) monk “Living Buddha Lord Ji” (Jigong Huofo 濟公活佛) on

the other serve the continuing presence of his charisma until today. Jigong is an important icon in the religious landscape of China who has a reputable life in both popular literature and popular religion, and who is closely associated with spirit-writing practices (see the seminal study by Shahar 1998). Through spirit-writing, Zhang's divine persona did not only partake in producing charisma during his lifetime, but he also continues to influence teachings, practices, and even organizational issues until today. By analyzing the case study of Fayi Chongde's deceased elder Chen Dagu 陳大姑 (1923–2008, literally "Lady Chen," a name given by believers but which, according to my fieldwork, is used to refer to chaste unmarried women), Billioud demonstrates convincingly how this model of divine charisma also applies to other important leaders, who do not merely continue to interact with the living through spirit-writing, but who are very much emotionally remembered and therefore are the source of tremendously powerful affective attachments. Yet, Billioud is careful to note that these observations may not be overly generalized as some branches had abandoned spirit-writing activities by the early 1990s (p. 76).

The operation of charisma is further approached in Chapter 3, which tackles the routinization of charisma away from the individual to the "charisma of function" (as Billioud calls it) – or "office charisma/charisma of the office," as the German "*Amtscharisma*" is usually rendered in English (see Weber 1978, pp. 216, 248, 1139–1141) – particularly in terms of initiation masters, *dianchuanshi* 點傳師. In particular, it describes the "routinization of the extraordinary" in Fayi Chongde, i.e., how the routinization and institutionalization of the division is regarded by practitioners as the result of divine intervention. It thus focuses not only on the role and function of the *dianchuanshi* in global and decentralized missionary activities, but also takes up the phenomenon of posthumous spirit interventions as facets of an "enchanted routinization" (p. 131) and "postmortem charisma" (p. 135) – observations that provide important insights for the sociology of religion in general.

Part 3 explores how Yiguandao practitioners employ Confucian teachings to defuse tensions with its social and political environments. These two chapters, in particular, connect to Billioud's earlier groundbreaking work on popular appropriations of Confucian teachings in Chinese societies. In doing so, this part draws on the well-established, but not undisputed, sociological understanding that "sects" are in a certain state of "tension" with mainstream society and, as Billioud convincingly demonstrates, probably more importantly, the state. By looking at the past and present situation of Yiguandao in various Chinese societies, where a high level of tension with the political authorities was the norm – such as in Taiwan under martial law, or in the PRC more generally – the two chapters specifically address the ways in which Confucian-based teachings and practices were and are invested successfully by Yiguandao practitioners in order to reduce this tension. The success of these activities derives partly from a receptive environment, as several projects to promote traditional Chinese culture were instigated by the authorities, such as in martial law Taiwan, when the "Chinese culture renaissance movement" was launched in 1966 by Chiang Kai-shek as a response to the Cultural Revolution started in the PRC by his archnemesis Mao Zedong. But also in democratic Taiwan Yiguandao continues to serve as one of the chief representatives of Confucian values by promoting – mostly Confucian – classics reading classes for children – a trend that is linked to the activities of an influential Confucian revivalist and student of Mou Zongsan, Wang Caigui 王財貴 (b. 1949). Similarly, in contemporary China, where the Communist Party heavily promotes Confucian values and Chinese traditional morality (*Zhonghua chuantong meide* 中華傳統美德), such as "filial piety" (*xiao* 孝) as the "blood vessel of the Chinese" (*Zhongguoren de xuemai* 中國人的血脈), Yiguandao skillfully advocates traditional culture and Confucian values through specific events, jointly organized Confucius veneration rituals, and broader publishing and charitable activities. One particularly fascinating example, which is discussed in Chapter 6 (pp. 188–193), is how the *Classic of the One Hundred Occurrences of Filial Piety* (*Baixiaojing* 百孝經) – a revised version of a Republican-era (1912–1949) text of other Confucian-inspired religious groups and which is intimately linked to Fayi division's leaders and spirit-writing activities – was adopted by the Chinese authorities in late 2009 and published in 2010 in the PRC to promote this Confucian core value.

Finally, Part 4 centers on the structure and organization of the missionary effort more generally as well as Yiguandao's strategy for navigating the "dangerous waters of cross-strait politics" (p. 195). Thus, while Part 1 zoomed into missionary-adepts' motivations and engagements in proselytization, here the focus

lies with analyzing how these activities are structured, organized, and strategically devised. Chapter 8, in particular, delves into an explanation of the meaning of the book's title, which is a translation of the technical term *kaihuang* 開荒 that, literally, refers to the cultivation of wilderness into arable land and is used metaphorically in Yiguandao (but also other sects in late imperial China) as referring to proselytization. The "wilderness" as imagined in the eyes of Yiguandao activists clearly refers to the PRC, from where Yiguandao was expelled in the 1950s and which, therefore, must be reclaimed (see also p. 29). As an obvious outcome of his lengthy fieldwork in Hong Kong, Billioud particularly stresses the strategic and geographical significance of the Special Administrative Region as a transregional hub of Yiguandao's expansion not only to the Mainland, but also to South East Asia more generally. From here, missionary-adepts are able to connect to considerably better institutionalized Confucian networks in the PRC, which they utilize for their proselytizing purposes.

In the beginning, Chapter 7 looks at how classes and seminars serve to "train talents" (*peiyang rencai* 培養人才), instigate multilateral interactions with Yiguandao communities in other places, and thus help build constantly expanding networks. In particular, Billioud observes that "[m]issionary-adepts associated with Buddha halls of this system have a strong sense of a common belonging that materializes in striking human circulations and common projects" (p. 210). Furthermore, he shows a remarkably high degree of organization in regard to missionary efforts, as Yiguandao personnel usually produce detailed statistics as monitoring tools, to adjust strategies and objectives, which are, as Billioud notes, "not without resemblance with company business plans" (p. 218). This observation is convincing, particularly when viewed against the background of Yiguandao's expansion into Taiwanese and, more generally, Chinese middle-classes and business entrepreneurs over the past decades. Thus, it is obviously not a coincidence that initiation masters are often addressed as "managers" (*jingli* 經理) – a term that is used particularly in the presence of outsiders because it is more neutral (see p. 131), but the specific semantic choice here mirrors the framework of private business networks in which Yiguandao has grown during the past decades.

Finally, Chapter 8 takes up politics and cross-strait relations in order to tackle Yiguandao practitioners' eventual aim to "reclaim" the Mainland. The chapter opens with a brief overview of the relationship of Yiguandao and Taiwanese politics during the past decades. In particular, it shows that there is "obvious interest [...] to keep good relationships with all sides in Taiwan" (p. 231), despite an early favoring of the National People's Party (*Guomindang* 國民黨, abbr. KMT) during the period of martial law, which seems to have aimed at Yiguandao's legalization – which was realized in 1987. Whatever the respective political allegiance, however, there seems to be a consensus that, because of its emphasis on traditional Chinese culture and its eagerness to return to the Mainland, Yiguandao is to be positioned within the camp of those who "definitely reject confrontation and radicalism and who are both eager to see relationships improve between the two shores" (p. 233). Against this background, it is not unexpected to learn that most practitioners that Billioud studied in Hong Kong were not only uninvolved in the 2014 "umbrella movement," but, in fact, that some were even opposed to it. The second half of the chapter, then, turns to explore the opening of the dialogue between the PRC and Yiguandao, which gained momentum in 2006, when a Yiguandao delegation visited Tianjin and Beijing in order to meet with Chinese officials. This successful summit proved to be only the beginning of many more exchange meetings to come, that not only saw PRC representatives and scholars of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences visit Yiguandao temples in Taiwan, but also in Macau. A particularly significant aspect that Billioud discusses – and which is partly explored in his earlier work (2015: 260–271) – are two large public ceremonies organized by Yiguandao and staged in Taipei in 2011 and 2017, and which aimed at venerating Heaven as the supreme force. These events were not only attended by various Taiwanese politicians and even by presidents Ma Ying-jeou (in office 2008–2016) and Tsai Ing-wen (since 2016), but also by PRC delegations. Yet, despite the good outlook of previous years, the author posits that it seems probable that, in the year 2019, we are witnessing a turning point. Thus, particularly under the tighter grip of the new regulations for religions in the PRC that came into effect in 2018 and echoed President Xi Jinping's call for a "Sinicization of religion," activities and mutual exchanges seem to have become more difficult. Hence, Billioud concludes, "there are now objective reasons to believe that the years to come will be difficult and that the road toward legalization might still be a very long one" (p. 259).

To conclude, *Reclaiming the Wilderness* is, without doubt, an impressive, compelling, and thought-provoking analysis of one of the most important and fastest-growing religious traditions in contemporary Chinese societies. It is unsurpassed in depth and scope, and thus not only adds to the relatively small field of Yiguandao studies, which, so far, only knows one other English-language monograph (Lu 2008), which, however, as a dissertation-turned-monograph has a narrower scope. Rather, *Reclaiming the Wilderness* is the single most important and authoritative study on Yiguandao to date – in any language. Readers will soon realize that this book comes from the pen of an intimate expert who is able to invest almost a decade of research and experience in the field, and to combine it with compelling arguments and well-balanced analyses. The list of references is absolutely up to date and Billioud is clearly in command of all discourses inside and outside of Yiguandao – including academic, religious, and political ones. Finally, I would like to highlight that readers will notice the great number of photographs and sketches throughout the book that connect excellently to the respective discussions and enable readers who are not so familiar with Yiguandao to better understand its practices and activities.

To sum up, *Reclaiming the Wilderness* is a must-read for scholars in the field, but also more broadly for anyone interested in the Confucian revival in China, cross-strait relations, and new religious movements. Finally, it also provides valuable insights for non-specialists and students. As such, Billioud has succeeded in providing a highly readable book that appeals to experts and nonspecialists alike and which, I am sure, will leave a great impact on Chinese studies and religious studies.

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Enacting the security community: ASEAN's never-ending story

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For an institution such as ASEAN, subject to long-standing critique of its ineffectuality, the apparent lack of progress made on the security dilemmas facing South-East Asia and its member states suggests to many that it is struggling to assume a role in regional security governance. In *Enacting the Security*