

## Editorial Foreword

### OUR COVER

Richard Wilcox's map of the Upper Brahmaputra in 1828, from R.H. Phillimore, *Historical Records of the Survey of India* vol. 3, 1815–1830, Dehra Dun: Survey of India, 1954. Used by permission.

This issue of the *Journal of Asian Studies* contains six research articles, each of which deals, in a broad sense, with representation. The first four do so in a deliberate way through literature and film, while the remaining two address religious identity and the mapping of “the Other,” respectively. All of the works are concerned on some level with encounter—an unsurprising predecessor to representation—addressing problems of translation, colonial power, and identity. In terms of geographic spread, these six pieces focus on three different parts of East Asia and two contrasting regions within South Asia.

The issue opens with a trio of articles on literature. The first, CHITRALEKHA ZUTSHI's “Translating the Past: Rethinking *Rajatarangini* Narratives in Colonial India,” explores two important efforts to render a twelfth-century Sanskrit narrative poem into English. The author uses this case study to help us think anew about the differences as well as the interrelationships between “Orientalist” and “nationalist” approaches to Indian literary works and, indeed, to visions of India's traditions and contemporary predicament.

The second article, “The Commercialization of Emotions in Zhang Ailing's Fiction,” by LIN ZOU, examines the themes of desolation and fatalism in the writings of one of China's most important modern authors. Until recently, Zhang Ailing (Eileen Chang), though widely read, was not the subject of much scholarly analysis because of her reputation as a “popular” author rather than a “literary” one, and perhaps also because she lived in a variety of locales (Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taiwan, California) and wrote in both English and Chinese. Recently, however, this situation has changed dramatically, as her corpus has inspired a great deal of praise and critical analysis. Zhang, who died in 1995, has gained new readers of late since the release of Ang Lee's controversial film *Lust, Caution*, based on one of Zhang's stories. In this essay, Zou casts Zhang's fiction in a new light by zeroing in on the way she frames human relations in economic terms, as a weighing of costs and benefits.

The final article on a literary theme, “The Location of ‘Korean’ Culture: Ch'oe Chaesŏ and Korean Literature in a Time of Transition,” deals with the complex case of a Korean author living during the period of Japanese colonial rule of Korea, whose most important activities included editing a Japanese-language journal. In this piece, SERK-BAE SUH maintains that Ch'oe, while arguing that Koreans had a high degree of cultural autonomy as subjects of the Japanese imperial state, nonetheless contributed, through his work as a translator

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and an author, to legitimizing Japan's control of Korea. The essay's focus on the range of positions that colonial subjects can stake out, from resistance to complete collaboration, makes it of interest to readers working in a range of Asian settings.

Shifting to film, KUEI-FEN CHIU's "The Question of Translation in Taiwanese Colonial Cinematic Space" also deals with colonialism, identity, and Japanese imperial rule, but in this case, the author's gaze is directed at cinematic productions rather than books or journals. Here, Chiu's specific concern is with the *benshi*, a special kind of translator whose job was to convey to audiences a sense of what was going on in a film they were watching that either lacked dialogue or featured actors speaking a language they could not understand. Chiu analyzes the *benshi*'s actions in the Taiwanese context, and the meanings ascribed to them in both Japan and Taiwan, illuminating debates about the dynamics of cultural translation in modern times.

The issue's article section ends with two essays that move to the other side of the Himalayas. The first, SHAFIQUE N. VIRANI's "*Taqiyya* and Identity in a South Asian Community," is a study of obfuscated religious identities. Specifically, it highlights the practice of *taqiyya*, a form of dissimulation whereby groups who fear they will suffer negative repercussions should their actual faith be discovered pass themselves off as followers of another belief system. Often, this leads to Shi'a dissimulating as Sunnis, but in this example, we instead find the Guptis of Bhavnagar, who are Muslim, dissimulating as Hindus. The author argues that this identification with Hinduism has, over time, formed an integral part of their belief system and identity. This raises questions about how role-playing can take on an unexpected significance over time.

This essay is followed by "Mapping a Colonial Borderland: Objectifying the Geo-Body of India's Northeast," which looks at how cartographic practices supplemented and shaped British imperial discourses about a specific section of South Asia. The authors, DAVID VUMLALLIAN ZOU and M. SATISH KUMAR, understand the mapping of India's Northeast frontier as a process that was structured by and helped extend imperial power. They insist that even the simplest aspects of maps, from the drawing of lines to designate borders to the placement of locales at the center or near the edge of the page, are value laden. The essay takes us backward in history, but tackles a subject whose contemporary relevance, in an era of digital cartography and satellite mapping, is made clear by discussions in the South Asian press of a Chinese competitor to Google Maps presenting territories under Indian control (including the Northeast state of Arunachal Pradesh) as parts of the People's Republic of China.

As usual, we close the issue with book reviews. In the past, *JAS* editors have rarely drawn attention to the book review section that closes each issue. This is natural, as these sections typically contain a diverse set of assessments of a wide range of books, making any effort at a short summary of their contents impossible. Nevertheless, in the future, I will make it a practice to single out unusual or unusually interesting pieces for special attention from time to time.

In this issue, I would flag as worthy of special mention M. C. RICKFELS's thoughtful and stylishly written review of the second volume of Victor

Lieberman's extraordinarily ambitious *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830*. This review, like the book that is its focus, is concerned in part with subjects addressed during the forum on interconnections among parts of Asia that was published in the November 2010 issue of *JAS*—although the forum was largely concerned with the period following the 1830 endpoint of Lieberman's project. Another reason to single out that review is that, while it is placed appropriately in the section devoted to books on "Southeast Asia," it addresses methodological issues with truly pan-Asian relevance.

—JNW

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## Forthcoming Articles in *JAS* 70:2 (May 2011)

### *Asia Beyond the Headlines*

Public Perceptions of Climate Change and Support for Climate Policies in Asia:  
Evidence from Recent Polls

SO YOUNG KIM

### *Trends*

Introduction to the *JAS* Mini-Forum "Regarding North Korea"

ROBERT OPPENHEIM

Korea On the Brink: Reading the Yŏnp'yŏng Shelling and its Aftermath

CHARLES K. ARMSTRONG

Korea On the Brink: Yeonpyeong and its Aftermath

NAN KIM

Lamponing the Paper Money Custom in Contemporary China

C. FRED BLAKE

*Translating Dharma*: Scottish Missionary Orientalists and the Politics of  
Religious Understanding in Nineteenth-Century Bombay

MITCH NEWMARK

A Muslim Vision of the Chinese Nation: Chinese Muslim Pilgrimage  
Missions to Mecca during World War II

YUFENG MAO

The Charisma of Power and Military Sublime in Tiananmen Square

HAIYAN LEE

Local Conflict in the Chinese Cultural Revolution: Nanjing Under Military Control

DONG GUOQIANG AND ANDY WALDER

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