Book Reviews

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Ge Zhaoguang

Here in 'China' I Dwell: Reconstructing Historical Discourses of China for our Time.

Translated by Jesse Field & Qin Fang. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2017. xiii; 217 pp. Price not stated. ISBN 978-90-0427997-1 (Hardback).

Fudan University, Shanghai, History Professor Ge Zhaoguang's book, *Here in 'China' I Dwell: Reconstructing Historical Discourses of China for our Time*, is published under Brill's Humanities in China Library, which is co-edited by Zhang Longxi of City University of Hong Kong and Axel Schneider of Göttingen University. The well written publication has been translated from its original Chinese edition into English by Jesse Field, a teacher as well as a translator and writer in Beijing, and Capital Normal University, Beijing, History Associate Professor Qin Fang.

The 217-page humanities' book is a historiographical overview of the formation of Chinese historical narratives, which stem from outsiders' quest for such publications on China. As the publishers have indicated, the publication includes a special discussion of the influence of historians from Japan on the concept of China and its territories. However, the author, in the preface, underscored clearly that his book, which is about large issues, is also "about China, East Asia and the world; politics and academia; acceptance and rejection; national and regional histories," (p. xi).

According to Professor Zhaoguang, he began to write this particular book after spending eight years to complete *An Intellectual History of China*, the last pages of which he wrote in the Fall of 2000 at Leuven University; however, as he explained further, at the time of writing this preface, I was a visiting professor at Princeton University," (p. xiii). He further explained that "the Chinese title for this book is taken from the inscription on a bronze ritual wine vessel (called *hezun*) dating to the Western Zhou era (late second millennium, BCE), the piece in question having discovered at Baoji, in Shaanxi province in 1963," (p. xii).

Divided into seven chapters and a conclusion, *Here in 'China' I Dwell* provides its readers with very useful additional sources from such non-Chinese writers as William Skinner, Robert Hartwell, Stephen Averill, Prasenjit Duara, Watanabe Hiroshi, Miyazaki Ichisada, Fujita Toyohachi, Oka Motoshi, K. A. Wittfogel, and others. Apart from the co-editors' foreword as well as the author's preface and an introduction, topical subject matters covered in the book include "The appearance of China consciousness during the Song Dynasty," (chapter 1); "Memories of foreign lands in the classic of mountains and seas, illustrations of tributaries, and travel accounts," (chapter 2); "Ancient Maps and the history of ideas," (chapter 3); "The real and the imaginary: who decides what Asia means?" (chapter 4); "Between nation and history: starting from the Japanese," (chapter 5); "Where are the borders? Starting with the context of the study of Manchuria, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, and Korea," (chapter 6); "From the western regions to the eastern sea," (chapter 7); and conclusion, "Predicting the currents: new perspectives on historical studies."

In his concluding chapter, which is about "Predicting the currents: new perspectives on historical studies [on China]," Professor Zhaoguang admits that "the modern study of Chinese academic history had become a hot field by the 990s," (p. 187). To the author, "there is more to it [historical studies] than simply giving vent to antiquarian desires when faced with a world that is not as we would like it to be," (p. 187). Above all, we further learn that "the period from the 1920s to the 1930s was an important one for modern Chinese academia," (p. 187). Very importantly, Liang Qichao has "divided Chinese history into three stages: 'Zhongguo zhi Zhongguo' (China's China), 'Yazhou zhi Zhongguo' (Asia's China), and 'Shijie zhi Zhongguo' (the world's China), based on three time periods: 'the earliest stage of ancient history, from the yellow Emperor to the Qin unification'; 'the middle age of history, from the Qin unification to the final years of the Qing dynasty Qianlong Emperor's reign'; and the most recent age of history, from the late Qianlong era to the contemporary," (pp. 191-192).

Most certainly, *Here in 'China' I Dwell* should be very useful to experts in Chinese history as well as all college levels of students and the leisure reader, who is interested in studying Chinese academic history.

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