

The book is divided into thirty-three sections. The sections are almost chronologically arranged in accordance with a woman's life circle—from puberty to menopause. Each section uses excerpts of interviews with forty-seven Chinese women. The youngest among them is twenty-nine, and the oldest is fifty-five. At the same time, the book also exposes interviewees' stances toward various aspects of sexuality: intercourse, adultery, divorce, cohabitation, lesbianism, pornography, rape, as well as relationships between love and sex, between love and marriage, and between sex and marriage. Furthermore, Li Yinhe devotes the last part of her book to interviewees' statements on gender issues. According to the author's introduction, most interviewees are "well-educated"—which in Chinese means having a college degree. Like the author herself, a great number of interviewees spent their adolescence and youth in the countryside or somewhere out of school during the Cultural Revolution. Their comments on various social, gender, and sexual issues often reflect their historically-determined personal experiences. In most cases, the author exposes their points of view without imposing much interference. This approach provides a space to the interviewees and allows them to speak as subjects instead of simply as objects of investigation—despite, or rather thanks to—the anonymous nature of interviews.

However, as Li Yinhe explains in her introduction, the circle of interviewees is limited. Although she states that these women do not need to be "typically" Chinese—since any selection is by nature subjective—in her conclusion she nevertheless essentializes them as typically Chinese, while classifying them as one category against another equally abstract one, Western women. In fact, her interviewees' attitudes and behaviors are due less to a cultural determinism—as the author seems to suggest in her conclusion—than to a specific political, social, and historical context. The author herself also observes that attitudes change according to different age groups, without mentioning that these changes can largely be attributed to social upheavals in China during the second half of our century. It is not simply coincidental that almost all her interviewees actually grew up during this tumultuous period. Furthermore, even without mentioning these changes, a line of demarcation drawn between the Chinese and the Western in today's global culture is itself questionable, especially because opinions expressed by interviewees often do not necessarily justify such a division but on the contrary prove cross-cultural similarities among women groups. Differences as well as similarities between these groups do not depend on a single category, but on many aspects, such as social positions, ideological beliefs, educational and cultural backgrounds. Despite a tendency to generalization, this book offers a valuable and much needed portrait of women's life in contemporary China—often from their own perspectives.

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South of the Clouds: Tales of Yunnan. Edited by LUCIEN MILLER. Translated by GUO XU, LUCIEN MILLER, and XU KUN. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1994. v, 328 pp. \$40.00 (cloth); \$19.95 (paper).

This volume, the result of a collaborative project sponsored by Yunnan Normal University in Kunming and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, includes translations of thirty-five short folktales arranged under seven thematic groupings

(viz., “Stories About Creation,” “Why People Do What They Do,” “Heroes and Heroines of the People,” “Animal Friends and Animal Foes,” “Wonder and Magic,” “Wise and Foolish Folk,” and “Lovers”). In a forty-page general introduction Professor Miller offers the geographical and cultural context in which these tales should be read. During the period of the May Fourth movement, folk literature and children’s literature began to be studied and translated extensively by Chinese intellectuals such as Zhou Zuoren, Mao Dun, and Shen Congwen. Although these early enthusiastic efforts were halted in 1937, interest in this genre resumed in the 1950s and early 1960s. Despite a stalling of these activities during the Cultural Revolution, studies of minority folklore has maintained a high profile among native folklorists and as Miller notes (p. 14), a large-scale project to collect and publish stories, songs, narrative poetry, and music of the twenty-five minority groups in Yunnan is currently underway. This vast study is expected to produce one hundred volumes.

Miller points out that differences in opinion between fieldwork-based folklorists and folk-literature archivists invariably raise questions of oral versus literary art. In addition, even specialists in the field of Yunnan minority folktales are not always certain whether all the Yunnan minority folktales collected so far can be considered authentic and reliable materials. Still, Miller and his collaborators (Professors Guo Xu, from the Foreign Languages Department at Yunnan Normal University, and Xu Kun, a specialist in Yunnan minority folklore who teaches in the Chinese Department at the same university) have chosen not to engage in folkloristic debates of this nature. Instead they have taken for their goal a rather more broadly-defined mission, namely, “to understand and translate Chinese redactions of Yunnan minority tales, myths, and legends as combinations of oral and written art” (p. 23).

In approaching this objective, the translators have followed Eugene Nida’s theory of translation, known as “dynamic equivalence” (see Eugene A. Nida and Jin Di, *On Translation: With Special Reference to Chinese and English* [Beijing: Zhongguo duiwai fanyi chubanshe, 1984], p. 85). Miller describes this three-tiered process as follows—first, Professor Guo, in consultation with Professor Xu, offered a “literate restructuring,” then Miller (who also discussed each text with Xu) worked out a literal translation followed by a more “creative” version that “recast the source language and story in its oral-performance context by altering structure, implanting English colloquialisms, and privileging or emphasizing an American cultural idiom in an effort to imagine the minority storyteller at work” (p. 25). Although this process may at first sound reminiscent of approaches taken by poets such as Ezra Pound and Gary Snyder in their “interpretations” of Chinese poetry, the difference, of course, is that Professor Miller’s expertise in Chinese texts is quite extensive. As such, the result of the collaborative efforts between him and Professors Guo and Xu is a collection of translations written in lively, readable English, which carries much of the delightful flavor readers universally expect of popular folktales.

In addition to the above-mentioned introduction and the tales themselves, the translators have provided additional materials to help readers become acquainted with the literature and cultures of Yunnan. Notes given at the end of each tale identify the collector, redactor, and editors of the textual version of the tale, as well as the ethnic origins of these individuals. Also mentioned is the approximate area of distribution for each tale. These endnotes also gloss specific place names, names of local gods and deities, particular terms that the translators have only transliterated in the text (e.g., *binbai*, “old woman” in the Kucong language; *sailangmu*, a common term of greeting in Hui). Professor Xu’s brief essay (“Introduction to Yunnan National Minority Folk Literature” [edited and translated by Miller]) precedes the translations. An informative

appendix includes maps of Yunnan Province and an identification of each of the twenty-five ethnic minorities in Yunnan, which gives such information as alternative names for the group, approximate current population, defining characteristics, traditional dress, as well as comments on architecture, and linguistic and religious practices. A glossary of Chinese characters appears near the end of the book (the only place where any characters are provided), followed by an extensive bibliography and an index.

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Radicalism and Education Reform in 20th-Century China: The Search for an Ideal Development Model. By SUZANNE PEPPER. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996. ix, 610 pp. \$59.95.

Suzanne Pepper's long-awaited study is the first comprehensive attempt by a Western scholar to write the history of China's modern educational revolution from its early twentieth-century origins down to the 1990s. Few if any Western scholars are more suited to undertake this daunting task than Pepper, whose influential chapters in the *Cambridge History of China* and other writings have shaped a generation of scholarship on contemporary Chinese education. Nearly twenty years in the making, this book represents the culmination of that scholarly effort.

Pepper believes that the Maoist educational revolution of the early 1970s should be viewed in historical perspective as representing "the culmination of an evolving critique almost as old as China's modern school system itself" (p. 518). Rather than being the epitome of good or evil, Mao's educational revolution was firmly rooted in a tradition of educational reform thought and practice that stretched back to the turn of the century and was directed against the perceived negative effects of modern schooling in China. These included the creation of an urban-oriented elite divorced from rural realities, an elitist disdain for manual labor not unlike that of the former Confucian gentry, infatuation with "world trends" and Western models, and the mechanical copying of those models without regard to their suitability or relevance for China. By the 1930s the critique counted adherents all along the ideological spectrum including communists, rural reconstructionists, and even the League of Nations. Moreover, the solutions they advocated were all broadly similar: decentralized, locally-oriented and -financed schools, flexible standards, and curricula geared to the genuine educational needs of the rural majority. Pepper reconstructs the evolution of this critique, showing how the same debates that tore through society at large were also reproduced within the CCP itself, both before and after 1949, in the form of an ongoing struggle over "regular" versus "irregular" schooling.

The book is comprised of three parts. Part 1 traces the origins and development of radical educational reform from the turn of the century through the Republican period to 1949. This section includes discussions of the late Qing educational reforms, the Nationalist school system and the rural reconstruction and communist alternatives. Parts 2 and 3 address the post-1949 period. The thirteen chapters contained here constitute an expanded and vastly more detailed treatment of the themes and issues Pepper first raised in her contributions to the *Cambridge History* volumes. Part 2 examines the introduction of the Soviet educational model as a manifestation of continued "mechanical copying" from abroad, which in turn bred