

The most important purported traitor was Ulanhu, the head of the government and the Communist Party in the autonomous region from at least 1947, who was accused of splittism. The Communist leaders in Beijing criticized him for seeking to preserve traditional Mongolian culture, for defending Mongolian pastoralists against the incursions of Chinese peasants and for maintaining relations with Mongolia, which had sided with the USSR during Sino-Soviet disputes and conflicts. Inner Mongolia had, in theory, been granted an autonomous status, but the Cultural Revolution revealed considerable limits on the reputed local decision-making and control. The critiques spread from Ulanhu to Mongolians in general and led to brutal attacks on this minority. Many more Mongolians than Han were killed during this chaotic period. The authors label this policy a pogrom. They also emphasize Han migration into Inner Mongolia, which created a 4:1 ratio in favour of the Han and undermined the concept of a Mongolian autonomous region.

Perhaps as important, Cheng shows that personal animosities, on occasion, trumped ideology in the Cultural Revolution struggles. Individuals who believed that they had been wronged by a leader in pre-Cultural Revolution days capitalized on the chaos to attempt to even the score. Their differing views on Communism or splittism in Inner Mongolia were of no consequence. They had despised each other before the Cultural Revolution, and their previous hostilities rather than ideological disputes shaped their actions.

One caveat: the level of detail that Cheng provides about events or conditions that occurred decades ago may beget suspicions about accuracy. He recounts the exact time he awakes on a particular day or the exact moment an event takes place. Or he offers a list of gifts he bought for a trip many years earlier. More important, he cites verbatim dialogues from meetings that he participated in many years ago. The editor should have questioned such precision about such long-ago events.

After Cheng's autobiographical account, the three authors consider the present status of minorities in China. They reject the term "genocide," or total elimination of a people, as the basis for Chinese Communist policies and instead employ "politicide," meaning the erasure of political and cultural identities. They conclude with a sobering but perhaps realistic assessment of the current situation: "the U.S. and its allies fiercely condemning China's treatment of its borderland minorities as genocide, while China reminds the United States of its own history of genocide against Native Americans as well as slavery and racial discrimination targeting African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans, among other immigrants" (p. 347).

doi:10.1017/S0305741024000079

Visions of Salvation: Chinese Christian Posters in an Age of Revolution

Daryl R. Ireland. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2023. 302 pp. \$69.99 (hbk). ISBN 9781481316248

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Visions of Salvation presents a previously little-known body of visual materials designed and disseminated by foreign missionaries and Chinese Christians in the Republican Period, and it addresses a large gap in the contemporary understanding of modern Chinese visual culture.



In his introduction, editor Daryl Ireland, research associate professor of mission at Boston University, presents evidence that Chinese Christian posters, while not produced in the same numbers as *yufenpai* (calendar) advertising posters or woodcut printed *nianhua* (New Year pictures), were nonetheless a significant presence in the Republican-period visual landscape. Ireland convincingly argues that these posters, beyond their obvious relevance to Christianity, contributed to discourses about Chinese modernity, the new nation, and its embodiment in public health and personal morality. Moreover, they counter the assumption that Chinese Communist propaganda was innovative in its use of posters, or even in its consciousness of popular taste. Unappreciated in the PRC after 1949, these posters became unfamiliar even to students of Chinese Christianity, surviving in small collections scattered among different institutions in the US, the UK and Europe. Once Ireland was alerted to their existence by a query (and generous donation) from a family who had unexpectedly inherited a trove of them, he began a project to identify these scattered collections, digitize them and make them accessible. The resulting website, Chinese Christian Posters (ccposters.com), brings together over 600 posters and forms a vital companion to the book.

Returning to the book, each of its ten chapters has as a title heading that references a general topic, such as “Social reform,” “Theology” or “Visual culture” but the ways that contributors explore these topics, and how they make use of the Christian posters, varies considerably.

For example, Connie Shemo, in “Women: public health, hygiene and nurses” uses a poster by Canadian missionary artist Beatrice Kitchen to illustrate a discussion of how Protestant missionaries’ engagement with healthcare contributed to the development of nursing as a respectable profession for Chinese women. The poster, entitled “I get vaccinated to guard against smallpox,” shows a (male) doctor vaccinating children while two women – one a uniformed nurse and the other perhaps a Sunday school teacher – look on. The inclusion of Kitchen’s poster brings detail and colour to Shemo’s account, but many meaningful features of it as a visual document remain to be explored. I say this not to detract from what Shemo does in her informative essay, but rather to reinforce Ireland’s assertion that these posters present many promising avenues for research. In this case, one can imagine consideration of how this image might compare to other representations of Chinese nurses, of Kitchen’s distinctive pen-and-ink style – quite different from most other Chinese Christian posters – or what its publication as number 41 in a series called “The World of Our Heavenly Father” suggests about how it was originally intended to be viewed.

In contrast, Dana L. Robert, in “Evangelism: the China Inland Mission and the use of ‘gospel posters’, 1925–1935” addresses the display and use of posters in relation to specific audiences in specific places. Generously quoting first-hand accounts from published and unpublished missionary memoirs, and from the China Inland Missions (CIM) magazine *China’s Millions*, Robert vividly conveys the special role that these “gospel posters” played in the work of this organization, which was dedicated to evangelical outreach in areas far from China’s coastal cities. CIM missionaries, Roberts tells us, often sought converts by preaching in public, in marketplaces or wherever else they could draw a crowd. Posters were central to these efforts, helping to attract attention to the missionaries, serving as visual and textual references during their preaching, and then remaining behind as a lasting presence. CIM missionaries also designed posters to suit special needs. Susie Garland designed a set of boldly graphic, textual posters especially for the use of Chinese Christian preachers, while Charlotte Tippet, whose outreach focused on rural women, painted cloth banners that incorporated images of rural women in vignettes of spiritual struggle and triumph. Robert attributes posters that combine Chinese and Arabic calligraphy to George Harris, who worked among Chinese Muslims in Gansu.

Robert, like Shemo and other contributors to this volume, brings a crucial depth of knowledge about missionary history and Christianity to the interpretation of these posters. To give one of many possible examples, Robert recognizes in posters by Garland and Harris a system of theological colour-coding first developed by evangelical Protestants in the 19th century, a layer of meaning easily missed by secular viewers. The familiar, sympathetic grasp of missionary culture seen here is

usually a strength, but there are moments when one wishes for a more critical attitude. Robert, perhaps, takes the glowing accounts of evangelical success he draws on too much at face value. It doesn't matter whether George Harris really won all the street-corner religious debates he provoked. However, Robert's consideration of the posters as tools of persuasion would only be enhanced by a consideration of missionary accounts of preaching with posters as another kind of persuasive tool, in this instance directed at audiences outside of China, upon whose donations the CIM in part depended. More seriously, it would be valuable for scholars with this sympathy and expertise to openly engage with scholarship that is sceptical about missionary contributions. The most relevant work here might be Larissa N. Heinrich's book *The Afterlife of Images: Translating the Pathological Body between China and the West* (Duke University Press, 2008), which argues that missionaries helped generate and perpetuate the damaging stereotype of China as the "sick man of Asia."

Taken as a whole, however, this lively, thoughtfully designed volume is a rich contribution to our understanding of Chinese culture in the early 20th century, with each chapter supplying fresh insights and information. It is suited for use in courses on a range of topics, from religion to propaganda, to Chinese history, art history and visual culture, and the transcultural exchange of ideas and images. Its value for teaching is enhanced, as mentioned above, by the Chinese Christian Posters website, which can support a variety of student projects, as well as more advanced research.

doi:10.1017/S0305741023001923

The Sounds of Mandarin: Learning to Speak a National Language in China and Taiwan, 1913–1960

Janet Y. Chen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2023. 412 pp. \$35.00 (pbk). ISBN 9780231209038

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Janet Y. Chen's *The Sounds of Mandarin: Learning to Speak a National Language in China and Taiwan, 1913–1960* examines the history of the standard national language in China and Taiwan, variously dubbed as Mandarin, *Guoyu* or *Putonghua*. She demonstrates how its invention was the product of a long process that included not only elite intellectuals and political parties, but also common people who struggled with, and at times outright rejected, the imposed national standard. Using an impressive array of archival sources from the PRC, Taiwan and the US, she weaves together a narrative that puts social history at its centre. Chen is less interested in elite-level politics (which she nevertheless deftly explains) and more in how students, teachers, movie-goers and radio listeners experienced the process of Chinese linguistic modernization. Some of the stories she tells will be new and entertaining even for scholars with knowledge of the subject. Phonographic records, radio broadcasts, Mandarin and non-Mandarin movies, and (to a much lesser extent) television are the media that Chen uses to explore the "linguistic soundscape" of China.

Many of the historical events that Chen identifies will be familiar, especially the tensions between Mandarin and the regional languages. Yet, Chen also deploys her expert knowledge of sources and her storytelling skills to make a series of powerful claims about Chinese linguistic modernization. The third chapter, for instance, demonstrates the significance – and the persistent difficulty – of