

lifetime, and it is reproduced here photomechanically as printed in *Der Ferne Osten* Band I (1902), pp. 24–38). The Chinese text of the first two plays by Yu Zhi (*Fengliu jian* and *Wenxing xian*) is included in this volume.

Other varieties of regional drama are represented by one play from Canton, entitled *Li Long xun qi* (Li Long Finds a Wife), a slight romantic comedy. *Huanju* is represented by two examples: *Jing Ke* (1924–'31) by Gu Yiqiao and *Yipian aiguoixin* (Patriotism, 1934) by Xiong Foxi. The latter translation had already appeared in print in 1935 in *Orient et Occident*, 2^{ème} année, no. 11–12, pp. 415–34. In this case too, the text is photomechanically reproduced as printed in *Orient et Occident*.

The translations are preceded by an introduction in which Prof. Gimm provides bibliographic and other information concerning the translated plays, providing references to contemporary scholarship. The original introductions as prepared by Prof. Forke are reproduced in the “Anhang”, which also includes some indexes.

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PO Sung-Nieln and David JOHNSON, *Domesticated Deities and Auspicious Emblems: The Iconography of Everyday Life in Village China*. Publications of the Chinese Popular Culture Project 2, Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1992, 107 pp.

Anne S. GOODRICH, *Peking Paper Gods: A Look at Home Worship*. Monumenta Serica Monograph Series XXIII. Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1991, 501 pp.

These two publications focus on the most important of New Year prints (*nianhua* 年畫 or *zhima* 紙馬) in traditional China, namely depictions of deities and the divine pantheon used in religious worship.¹ They exclude the pictures of beautiful ladies or scenes from vernacular literature. As one extant picture from the twelfth century shows, at least pictures of beautiful ladies, “who topple the nation”, were also known from an early date onwards.² New Year prints were (and are again) predominantly bought at the end of the old lunar year, to be used in various forms of religious worship at the beginning of the Chinese New year and/or simply to adorn the walls of a room.

¹ The principal introduction to the religious New Year print still is Clarence B. Day, *Chinese Peasant Cults: Being a Study of Chinese Paper Gods* (Shanghai, Kelly and Walsh, 1940). An important work is Nagao Tatsuzô 永尾龍造, *Shina minzoku shi* 支那民俗誌 (three vols.) (preface 1940; reprinted by Zhongguo minsu xuehui and Dongfang wenhua shuju, Taipei, 1971). Unlike most works, Nagao describes the religious context of these pictures and treats the iconography of the New Year festival in exhaustive detail.

² For this picture see Bo Songnian 薄松年, *Zhongguo nianhua shi* 中國年畫史 (Liaoning meishu, Shenyang, 1986) p. 19. On non-religious New Year prints, see also Danielle Eliasberg, *Imagerie populaire chinoise du Nouvel An, Arts asiatiques XXXV* (1978) with prints concerning theatre from the collection of Édouard Chavannes. This work is not mentioned by Po/Johnson in their Select Bibliography.

Domesticated Deities by Po Sung nien (Bo Songnian 薄松年) and David Johnson is an exhibition catalogue, with full illustrations and good commentary. All reproductions are of excellent quality, with a sufficient number in colour to give some idea of the nature of these prints. This book is a good and concise introduction to the phenomenon, covering paper gods from different parts of China. The material is obtained from Po Sung-nien's personal collection. He has done fieldwork and research on the New Year print since the early 1950s and published a study in 1986 (mentioned in note 2). In this book, he surveys the history of the New Year print from its earliest antecedents (such as paintings of door gods on the gates of graves), through the traditional print itself until the modern communist propaganda poster. He deals mainly with the New Year print as an independent artistic genre, devoting the most attention to the handicraft dimension of the prints.

From the work by David Holm, we know that popular prints were a topic of central concern to the Chinese Communist Party leadership from the Yan'an Period onwards, because they were well aware of the considerable ideological impact that these pictures had on people's world views. From very early on, engaged artists on the political left and party propagandists have therefore attempted to re-mould the tradition to fit political needs and ideals.³ It would be most interesting to have learned more about how and where Po Sung-nien himself fitted in and to learn his personal views on this remoulding of local culture, which ended in large-scale destruction.⁴

Interestingly, most examples in this catalogue are recent prints from Qing woodblocks dating from after the Cultural Revolution. This indicates that these prints are again being used in their traditional pre-1949 form. Does this mean that this traditional material is still interpreted and used in the same way as before or has the context changed after all? How did the author obtain these prints and how were they used when he acquired them?

Peking Paper Gods by Anne Goodrich is much more ambitious in its set up. Like its predecessors on the Temple for the Eastern Marchmount (*dongyue miao*) in Beijing and on Chinese Hells, this voluminous book draws from material collected by the author in 1931 in Beijing. Sadly, it has remained an unwieldy card box file in book format, based on the evidence provided by the author's Chinese teacher and predominantly Western language secondary literature. A serious evaluation of the quality of the information is lacking and it cannot be used as a reliable reference work.

Almost half of the illustrations are not from the author's own collection, but from A. Nachbaur and Wang Ngen Joung, *Les images populaires chinoises* (Min Kien Tche T'ou Siang) (Pekin: Atelier Na Che Pao, 1926). This important

³ David L. Holm, "Art and Ideology in the Yanan Period, 1937-1945" (Ph.D. thesis, Oxford University, 1979) pp. 181-204, Chapter 8, "The CCP's New Nianhua", and Stefan Landsberger, "Visualizing the Future: Chinese Propaganda Posters from the 'Four Modernizations' Era, 1978-1988" (Ph.D. thesis, Leiden University, 1994), *passim*.

⁴ In his 1986 book, he reveals some of his personal views on the post-1949 developments in a postscript (pp. 224-232). However, he is somewhat restricted by the need to present a politically correct view, which stresses the havoc wrought by the Cultural Revolution and the so-called Gang of Four and largely ignores the misery of preceding campaigns. On the whole, he takes a positive view of post-1949 artistic developments in the genre.

and quite rare book is not discussed by the author in her main text nor is it mentioned in her bibliography. It has been relegated without comment to the list of illustrations, almost at the end of the book. In terms of iconographic detail and many actual depictions, the author's collection is virtually the same as the Nachbaur/Wang material. The criteria for selecting material from this publication instead of the author's own collection are not indicated. Often identical pictures from both collections are included (for instance, pp 72/76, pp 78/80, pp 90/91 and so forth). A serious drawback is the consistent use of black-and-white reproductions, since we already possess a large amount of such material. It has sometimes resulted in rather fuzzy reproductions of prints that were originally in colour (compare for instance the reproduction on p 66 to the illustration on the back cover, or take the various pantheon pictures). A major problem in using the book is the absence of clear references in the discussion of a picture to the precise page where it is printed. Some discussions lack pictures, (such as on pp 48-49, pp 56, pp 58-59, p 81, p 97, p 117, p 119, p 123 and so forth) and some pictures lack a discussion (such as on p 57, p 59 and elsewhere). In some instances the footnotes contain literal repetitions (such as on p 35, p 68 and p 87). In general, this book has suffered from a lack of rigorous editing.

These two publications are not the only recent additions on the subject of religious New Year prints. Other important works in the last few years are

a Wang Shucun 王樹村, *Zhongguo minjian nianhua shi tulu* 中國民間年畫史圖錄 (Shanghai renmin meishu, Shanghai, 1991) (two vols with some 872 New Year prints, including a small number of precursors on stone or as paintings)

All reproductions are in black and-white, but this is compensated for by the huge quantity of prints from all over China (including Southern China and minority areas). Religious as well as cultural prints are included. The book contains a historical essay by Wang Shucun. The present whereabouts of the pictures are not indicated.

b Wang Shucun, *Le papier fetiche le culte des dieux a travers les estampes folkloriques* (Xinshijie chubanshe, Beijing, 1991)

A topically organized survey of mainly religious New Year prints. The illustrations come from all over China and are from Wang's private collection. They are all of good quality, in full colour, and with accompanying detailed descriptions.

c Na fu, ying xiang *Guoli zhongyang tushuguan nianhua zhuanji* 納福迎祥國立中央圖書館年畫專集 (National Central Library, Taipei, 1991)

This is an exhibition catalogue. It includes a rather nice set of colour reproductions of door gods from all over China, a catalogue of the National Central Library holdings, and a useful essay by Lu Jintang 盧錦堂.

Of the books presently available on the topic, Wang Shucun's *Le papier fetiche* is no doubt the richest introduction to the religious New Year print. In it he also corrects the past lopsided focus on cultural (non religious) prints that prevailed for many years after the Cultural Revolution because of ideological constraints. Wang's material predates the Cultural Revolution and has survived these difficult years because the author was able to hide it in time in the countryside. These three catalogues and the other recent works mentioned by Po/Johnson in their "Select Bibliography" supersede previous publications by far in quantity and quality of their reproductions.

It is not clear to what extent the private collections of Po Sung-nien and Wang Shucun are open to researchers. Important public collections are presently in the Hermitage in St Petersburg (collected by V M Alekseev in North

ern China and undoubtedly the largest collection outside China today⁵), the Musée Guimet in Paris (collected at the same time as Alekseev by his travel companion Édouard Chavannes in Northern China), the Hamburgisches Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg (collected in Beijing and Nanjing), and the National Central Library in Taipei. Clarence Day donated his collection to the Hartford Seminary (Hartford, Connecticut), but its present whereabouts are unclear. It is potentially an important collection, since he was active in the Lower Yangzi region.

An important drawback in almost all recent and past publications is the fact that they mainly contain material from Northern China, usually from the same printing centres. Material from other parts of China is rather thin, and there is good reason to assume considerable regional variety in the New Year prints. Hopefully, more original material from other regions will become available in the future so that we may obtain a more balanced view of the iconography of New Year prints.

Despite the wealth of recent publications on the New Year print, very little is said in these publications on what people actually thought about them. We can find this out only in an oblique way, by using evidence from the twentieth century remoulding of tradition. In his doctoral dissertation, David Holm surveys the traditional New Year print and its manufacture in North China, and analyzes how the Communist Party attempted to reshape this genre to its own propaganda needs. In the course of this remoulding effort, the communist artists and the party propaganda machinery gathered quite rare and therefore extremely valuable, explicit statements by non-elite people on the aesthetics and functions of these prints.⁶ Similar indirect information can be found in Sherman Cochran's study of the role of advertising in the successful Western penetration of the Chinese tobacco market in the first half of this century and in Stefan Landsberger's recent analysis of the Chinese communist propaganda poster.⁷

It is clear that the New Year print holds a special fascination for many scholars. As a result, it is consistently treated as an independent genre, whereas it should be studied together with other forms of visual representations, whether religious or cultural. Thus, there is little point in looking at the iconography of these pictures without studying temple frescoes, masks and statues, altar paintings or even book illustrations (for instance, in surveys of religious hagiography such as the *Sanjiao yuanliu shengdi fozu soushen daquan* 三教俚流聖帝佛祖搜神大全, and in vernacular literature). The same applies to the analysis of the techniques of

⁵ On this journey, see Alekseev's excellent diary *China im Jahre 1907, Ein Reisetagebuch* (original Moscow, 1958) (S. Behrsing trsl., with comments by B.L. Riftin and an essay by M.V. Ban'kovskaja and B.L. Riftin, "Der russische Sinologe Alekseev und seine Chinareisen"; Gustav Kiepenheuer Verlag, Leipzig und Weimar, 1989).

⁶ Holm (1979) pp. 87–117, Chapter Four: "The woodcut movement, 1930–1943"; pp. 118–165, Chapter Five: "Traditional *nianhua* manufacture in North China"; pp. 181–204 "The CCP's new *nianhua*".

⁷ Sherman Cochran, *Big Business in China: Sino-Foreign Rivalry in the Cigarette Industry, 1890–1930* (Harvard UP, Cambridge, Mass., 1980). For the study by Landsberger, see note 3. In writing this paragraph I have benefitted much from discussions with Dr. Landsberger.

representation, the material used for these representations and so forth. After all, paper representations were used because they were cheap and easy to replace, and not out of some fundamental religious consideration.

Recently, Bent Pedersen has published a useful historical survey on pantheon prints, or *baifen tu* 百分圖. These were and are still used in the annual worship of Heaven, Earth and all the deities shortly after New Year.⁸ He identifies the various deities in a clear and accessible way. He also makes a first attempt to include other types of iconographical sources in the discussions, such as temple frescoes. In his introduction to Po/Johnson, David Johnson also mentions ongoing iconographical research by Angela Cedzich and Paul Katz on exorcist deities and the Daoist frescoes of the Yongle Palace, respectively. We need far more of such studies.

Furthermore, being printed on paper, the New Year prints can also be fruitfully compared with other paper objects used in Chinese religious worship, such as exorcist or protective paper cuttings (*zhuaji wawa*),⁹ paper money,¹⁰ paper funerary objects, objects used in exorcism and so forth. This automatically brings us to another often neglected topic, the use of materials other than paper and of other types of representations for the same kind of function.

The questions we should ask are not merely what these different kinds of objects made from and on silk, wood, straw, paper, iron and so forth looked like, but also and more importantly how they functioned and how they were perceived. These representations helped people to visualize their deities (whether Buddhist, Daoist or general), giving shape to their beliefs and serving as the physical focus of worship and ritual. Were they merely a focus of attention, did they only provide a temporary abode for deities called down by prayers and rituals, or could they also be perceived as real presences? Certainly, the use of blood to daub the eyes of paper gods indicates that they were made to come alive, in the same way as statues. If left alone and forgotten, they might even come literally alive and start to haunt people.

Visual and written information should not be considered separate sources of information. A common representation is that of the Lord of the Stove who rides on a white horse to ascend to Heaven. Now, the white horse also appears in blood covenant ceremonies as the prescribed sacrifice to Heaven, in anecdotes of messengers from Heaven dating back to the Han dynasty, in Daoist rituals and so forth. A medium in trance mimics his journey by horse to heaven, simply by means of bodily gestures. Horses, representations or enactments, all have the same objective. In short, what we need now are studies, not catalogues. These studies should make full use of the available ethnographic record.

⁸ "Popular Pantheons in Old China", *Journal of Oriental Studies* XXVI 1 (1988) pp 28–59 with useful references. These paintings were used at the beginning of the New Year for the collective worship of the deities of Heaven and Earth. We find exactly the same type of painting among the Yao in Southern China and Southeast Asia, but then as painted scrolls for more permanent use, see for instance Jacques Lemoine, *Yao Ceremonial Paintings* (White Lotus, Bangkok, 1982) pp 125–130.

⁹ Jin Zhili 靳之林, *Zhonghua minzu de baohushen yu fanyan zhi shen – zhuaji wawa* 中華民族的保護神與繁衍之神——掀髯蛙蛙 (Zhongguo shehui kexue, Beijing, 1989).

¹⁰ Hou Ching-lang, *Monnaries d'offrande et la notion de tresorerie dans la religion chinoise* (Memoires de l'institut des hautes etudes chinoises, Paris, 1976).

as well as more primary evidence. Such studies should place the New Year prints in its larger context, instead of studying it as an isolated genre. The works by Po Sung-nien and David Johnson, by Anne Goodrich, as well as those by Wang Shucun, David Holm and others are a first step in this important task that still awaits us.

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