

Association—the generally conservative political party that has joined together with Malays and Indians in a governing Alliance since independence—dispatched a task force to Sanchun. This was a time when the riots of May 1969 were still fresh in mind and there was a threat of factional divisions which would seriously undermine the very nature of the traditional Chinese-Malay accommodation. Much of what she witnessed has already been published in *Asian Survey*. When read together with the extensive background chapters found in this monograph, the withdrawal of the task force when it unexpectedly tapped deep resentments that threatened to destroy the linkages established in years gone by, also reveals the potential instability of the Malaysian political compromise.

Those of us who have specialized on the Chinese diaspora recognized early on that the best scholarship requires a certain interdisciplinary flair. Thus the following comments are not made by an unsympathetic reviewer who wishes to demean the world of the field researcher. If anything, an inclination to get to the grass roots offers library-bound scholars, like myself, insights which rarely come across in the written record. The great failing of the book is not its “village perspective” which is most enlightening but the fact that it is overburdened with unnecessary jargon and conceptualizations which will inevitably deter readers who might otherwise take a keen interest in the Malaysian Chinese. Why does the discipline which has the greatest ability to make people “real” persist in making them so “abstract?”

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R. David Arkush, *Fei Xiaotong and Sociology in Revolutionary China*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981. \$20.00.

Fei Xiaotong is the foremost sociologist/anthropologist of modern China, and Arkush's book is the first full biographical treatment of Fei's long and at times dramatic career. The life of a sociologist may not seem a worthy focus of a historian's attention, but Arkush shows how this particular colorful life helps illuminate important aspects of China's evolving relationship with the West.

A simple listing of the highlights in Fei's career illustrates his accomplishments and problems. He began his study of sociology, a newly developing Western import, at Yanjing University in 1930, and there and subsequently at Qinghua University he studied with a number of leading lights in the field: Wu Wenzao, Robert Park, and Sergei Shirokogoroff. An initial field research trip among minority peoples in Guangxi resulted in serious injury to Fei and the death of his new bride. A recuperation period in a village in his native county in Jiangsu Province produced the fieldwork that Fei would later develop, under the guidance of Bronislaw Malinowski at the London School of Economics, into his classic study, *Peasant Life in China*—one of the first attempts by an anthropologist to study a community in a complex civilization. Return to a China at war led Fei to Kunming where he taught sociology and presided over a group of young researchers then carrying out a wide range of field studies of villages and factories. Concern for China's problems, a wartime visit to the United States, and the need to cope with spiralling inflation led Fei to become an essayist and social commentator, writing articles and books for the general public which were widely read and appreciated for their moral stance and colorful style. These writings and Fei's increasing involvement in reformist politics led to his becoming a target for Guomindang

repression, at one point having to go into hiding to escape the bullets that killed other liberal critics of the regime.

Fei was never a believer in communist doctrines, and his liberal outlook and foreign associations predisposed him toward skepticism. But after 1949 he was impressed by the efforts of the new government and the degree of unity achieved, and he began to cooperate actively and was rewarded by being chosen for a number of posts and committee memberships. Still, Fei and others were evidently irked by the decision in 1952, made under the influence of the "Soviet model," to eliminate sociology as a discipline. In 1957, during the "100 flowers" campaign designed to encourage intellectuals to voice their criticisms of the government, Fei engaged in a flurry of activity designed to show the utility of sociology in the new society and foster the rehabilitation of the field. Later in the same year his activities led to Fei and many others being branded as "rightists," and he was denounced by many former colleagues and personally castigated by Mao Zedong. He then became a non-person for nearly 15 years, although he was apparently never imprisoned. He began to be seen in public again by foreign visitors in 1972, but his activities throughout this period remain unclear. Then in 1979 a top-level decision was made to revive sociology, and an exonerated Fei Xiaotong emerged as the formal leader of the revived field, presiding over its professional association and new research institute within the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, writing articles, and travelling abroad to lecture and to revive ties with foreign sociologists.

In Arkush's treatment the details of the earlier parts of Fei's career come across clearly and this is testimony to his diligence as a researcher, for he has only met Fei once, briefly, and that meeting took place after research on the biography was completed. From a detailed reading of Fei's writings (a bibliography of all of those available in the West is appended) and interviews with past friends and associates Arkush constructs for us an impression of Fei's personality and scholarly style—a buoyant optimism, wide-ranging curiosity, a tendency to work hastily and make his ideas known and then move on to other topics, and an abiding faith that research methods that originated in a Western discipline can help solve some of China's real problems. Fei spent considerable time in the West, had many close friendships with foreigners, and conversed and wrote almost as freely and vividly in English as in Chinese. Still Arkush concludes that Fei was not a "marginal man," out of place in his native culture. Rather, Fei was simply one example of the sort of cosmopolitan Chinese who became prominent "when China faced West." When China turned back inward after 1949, Fei and many others like him were much more in danger of marginality. Valiant efforts to prove their patriotism and the value of their skills and experience to their country did not protect them from severe conflicts with China's new rulers. That Fei Xiaotong, at 70 years of age, has reemerged and has finally been given official approval for the task he has argued in favor of for more than thirty years—building a sociology that is compatible with Chinese socialism—can be considered a tribute to his capacity for survival and optimism. But it may be premature to consider Fei fully vindicated, for the obstacles that must be overcome to revive a field that has been "dead" for more than a generation remain formidable.

Although in most respects this biography is informative and of high scholarly standards, it has one major flaw. The three-dimensional picture of Fei's life that is presented for the pre-1949 years becomes two dimensional up until 1957, with many blank spots concerning Fei's activities and thinking after the revolution. Then after 1957 not even one dimension is possible—indeed, the years since 1957 are covered in

barely 10 pages out of almost 300 pages of text. Arkush cannot really be faulted for the sketchy picture of Fei's post-1949 career, for the nature of China's political system and of Sino-American relations in this period has made satisfactory biographical treatment of any important Chinese figure impossible. One can only hope that in the future circumstances will change so that the details of lives as colorful and pivotal as Fei Xiaotong's can become known and appreciated.

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John Curtis Perry, *Beneath the Eagle's Wings, Americans in Occupied Japan*, New York, Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1980, 246 pp.

This book on the "success story" of the American occupation of Japan is aimed at the general reader. Its target, writes Professor John Perry, Professor of Harvard's Japan Institute, is the American reader who has been told so frequently that "the United States seems to have done badly in the world..." Perry warns that his book is "less on what the Occupation did to the Japanese than on what the experience meant to the individual Americans most intimately involved with it—and to this nation."

Since this is not a scholarly treatment of the Occupation, specialists will be disappointed to discover so little on specific reforms. But Perry's book is lucid, provocative balanced, and full of good quotations to "spice up" lectures on the Occupation.

The author believes the Occupation was a success because it was an American show and the occupiers were magnanimous, well informed, sincere, and free of prejudice. More importantly, many Japanese accepted the "noble aims" of the occupation and cooperated greatly.

Perry's book is not an ethnocentric panegyric on the American Occupation. The reader learns that the American occupiers often proceeded with ill-advised reforms from misguided assumptions of superiority and the view that American values and institutions could be universally applied.

Perry's best chapter is the second one where he describes the cultural "baggage" the Americans carried with them. One example that was basic in guiding American policy—and still divides students of Japanese history—was the view that the 1930's were an aberration; all the Occupation needed to do was to resurrect Taishō liberals and help them resume the path toward democracy.

Professor Perry is not afraid to make some judgments. Among them I list the following:

1. MacArthur was not interested in Japanese culture for its own sake; instead he was interested in building a Christian democracy and using Japan as an instrument in his quest for the presidency.
2. The Tokyo trials were a travesty in justice.
3. American aid only came after we realized that democracy could not be taught to a starving people and American strategic interests required it.
4. The purges were undemocratic and arbitrary. They ignored the fact that Japanese in power were often guided by those out of power.
5. Decentralization American style was undesirable.
6. Those reforms which were most successful were those where seeds were already planted.
7. It is an exaggeration to use the term "reverse course" because that implies a firmness of direction and a sureness of purpose that the Americans didn't exercise.