

The book identifies and analyses in a rather convincing and well-documented manner the most crucial texts to the formation of a new Taiwan. Notes and bibliography fill almost one third of the book's 344 pages. Yip has conducted interviews with the artists to provide first-hand material in support of her interpretive accounts. *Envisioning Taiwan* is a must read for students in East Asian literature and cinema.

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*Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture*. Edited by EDWARD L. DAVIS. [London and New York: Routledge, 2005. xxiv + 786 pp. \$210.00. ISBN 0-415-24129-4.]

Readers seeking information about prominent urban Chinese artists, writers, composers, film-makers, public intellectuals, and socio-cultural trends in the reform period will find much of use in the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture*, a collaborative transnational effort that is unfortunately marred by unevenness and sloppy editing. Browsers will also find lively and opinionated essays about cars and taxis, *falun gong*, democracy, dating and sex shops.

Editor Edward L. Davis gave free reign to the contributors of the almost 1,200 entries in this fifth volume, encouraging them to pass judgment and editorialize. He also wisely involved mainland scholars like Yue Daiyun and Dai Jinhua when drawing up the lists of entries, and called upon Francesca Dal Lago to oversee the book's excellent sections on visual arts. While the *Encyclopedia's* list of contributors includes prominent, well-established scholars (Timothy Cheek on intellectuals and academics, Frank Dikötter on prisons, and Geremie Barmé on seemingly anything he wanted to write about), its large number of young, Chinese-born scholars based in North America and Europe reflects an important shift in the field of Chinese studies.

Entries, varying in length from a single paragraph to ten pages (see Lionel Jensen's piece on *falun gong*, for example), are organized alphabetically, include cross-references, and are often followed by suggestions for further reading. A helpful thematic classified entry list precedes the entries themselves. Unfortunately, problematic organization undermines the book's usefulness for both literate Chinese readers and those with no knowledge of the language. *Pinyin* renderings of names and phrases are not accompanied by Chinese characters, hampering the task of scholars hoping to conduct further primary-source research on a particular person. In addition, while some terms are alphabetized according to an English translation (like the music band, Wild Children, whose Chinese name, Ye haizi, is not provided anywhere), many others are arranged solely by *pinyin*, like *san ge daibiao* (Jiang Zemin's "three represents," a translation that does not appear in the classified entry list or in the "t" section of the index), rendering them completely inaccessible to readers unfamiliar with Chinese.

While previous volumes in Routledge's encyclopedias of contemporary culture series define the "contemporary" period as having commenced around 1945 or even earlier, the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Chinese Culture* limits itself to a much narrower timeframe: 1979 to the present. This practical editorial choice reflects the massive changes that have occurred in China since Mao Zedong's death. Yet it is also a reminder of an unfortunate trend in Chinese studies: social scientists rarely dare to conduct research on the Mao period or topics unrelated to recent economic reforms, while historians seldom venture beyond 1949. The resultant disjunctures, rather than continuities, dominate our thinking about modern China, and misconceptions about the Mao period, and especially the Cultural Revolution, abound.

Happily, some entries in the *Encyclopedia*, including a sensitive three-page essay on the Cultural Revolution by Barmé, violate the book's temporal boundaries. But overall, the Mao period appears as a cultural vacuum. For example, an entry about architecture proclaims: "Due to the cultural destruction between 1949 and 1979, the majority of the public are poorly educated" (p. 17). If we only seek "culture" in large coastal cities, or in galleries and on film screens appraised by Western critics, then perhaps the Mao period was culturally lacking. But if we turn our attention to villages, private spaces, and the patterns and rituals of daily life, rural China – both before and after 1979 – looks as culturally rich as today's Beijing or Shanghai. Notable and welcome exceptions to the *Encyclopedia's* overall urban elite bias include entries on Catholic villages and rural weddings by Eriberto P. Lozada Jr., on "cultural landscapes" by Peter M. Foggin, on hospitals by Eric I. Karchmer, and on suicide by Michael R. Phillips. Solid entries on ethnic groups and on regional music and performing arts also serve as reminders of China's incredible regional diversity.

I had initially hoped to recommend this book as a useful starting point for undergraduates in search of research topics on post-Mao China. Students interested in avant-garde art, or a particular trend in cinema or poetry, will find a treasure trove of interesting ideas and themes. However, after a close reading revealed over 30 typographical and spelling errors, I can only recommend it as a negative example of what to turn in for a bad grade. Slapdash proofreading is unacceptable in any publication, let alone an encyclopedia with an astronomical price tag. Even worse than the *pinyin* mistakes and misspellings of the names of scholars like Chen Xiaomei, Elizabeth Perry, and Michael Schoenhals ("Chen Xiaoming," p. 236, "Elisabeth," p. 494, and "Shoenhals," pp. xiv, 563), is the disservice done to non-native writers of English, who in some cases were not given adequate assistance in transforming their entries into passable prose. If these problems could be remedied in a less expensive paperback edition, the *Encyclopedia's* utility as a reference tool would be greatly enhanced.

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