

es, surprisingly the word gender does not appear. Reading all the interview fragments, however, almost every one shows how crucial gender relations cut across the choices of both men and women. If respondents experience gender roles in the family, in the community, or when back in Italy in the village, as problematic, this clearly hinders their identification with the Italian community or makes them less willing to engage in transnational behavior in regard to the village of origin of their parents.

The approach of Wessendorf, already by its design, makes it impossible to only explain identity formation or transnationalism through the ethnic or in-group lens. Wessendorf both starts and ends her book with the story of three sisters who all made very different choices in this respect. It is almost as if she wants to show how even on the level of the family (holding that constant) differences in identity formation and transnationalism cannot be explained, giving thus more explanatory power to school circumstances, peer groups and “personal” development. In Wessendorf’s own words: “It is rather the banal everyday social relations (both locally and transnationally) which shape the second generation’s divergent senses of belonging.”

It is here where I want to cast a more critical note to her analysis. Some of the situations that children encounter in their neighborhood, in school, or even in forming their peer group are indirectly influenced by the choices of their parents. Like the choice to live close to co-ethnics or to send children to an Italian school rather than a regular school. This already reveals some ideas of the parents regarding the preferred path of integration for their children. These different parental choices also ask for an explanation. In line with Wessendorf’s approach, we could imagine that probably this has to do with the experiences of the parents while integrating in Swiss society and their own history when growing up in the village in southern Italy. Maybe the migration of some of the parents was an attempt to get away from the suffocating social control of the village or conflicts their family had with other families in the village.

I conclude, being aware that my short review can never do justice to the enormous richness of the book, giving attention to an important other merit of the book. The experiences of the adolescents, Wessendorf emphasizes that this is only a very small group, that chose to migrate to the original village of their parents in Italy, are very interesting. These are in many ways the second-generation youngsters who are closest to their roots. They were in Switzerland the youngsters who wanted to be looked upon as Italian, who speak Italian, and who where emerged in Italian community life in Switzerland. Arriving in the village of their parents to go and live there, however, comes as a culture shock to many of them. Especially the women go through a very difficult time of trying to adapt and some in the end cannot cope and move disillusioned back to Switzerland. Their transnational behavior in the end tells an important story about their integration into Swiss society. They have become more Swiss or more a city dweller than they acknowledged themselves.

Maurice Crul

Wilkerson, James, and Robert Parkin (eds.): *Modalities of Change. The Interface of Tradition and Modernity in East Asia*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2013. 249 pp. ISBN 978-0-85745-568-0. Price: \$ 90.00

If we look at the world in the past decades, one of the regions that have experienced the most impressive socio-economic changes might be East Asia. Japan was the first to rise from the rubble of World War II and established itself as one of the most important economic bodies in world economy. Taiwan and South Korea have completed the process of industrialization and become important producers and traders in the world. The post-Mao China has replaced socialism with a state-sponsored capitalism and developed into the world’s second largest economic body. These political and economic changes have far-reaching impacts on social life, thus qualifying this region as excellent places to observe the interplay between tradition and modernity.

This volume edited by James Wilkerson and Robert Parkin has put together a group of interesting ethnographic studies of the intertwining of tradition and modernity in communities in East Asia. All articles in this volume except one are based on ethnographic researches in ethnic minority communities in mainland China, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Examining unique modalities of modernity experienced by people and communities outside mainstream cultures, articles in this volume have made valuable contributions to our understanding of the tradition and modernity experienced by different people in different social, economic, and political contexts.

As the two editors have pointed out in the introductory chapter, “elements of tradition persist, being changed by, but also in their turn modifying, other influences” (9). While traditions are often reinvented to serve present agendas, external influences were often modified by the agency of the natives to serve locally defined purposes. This complex relationship between modernity and tradition is reflected at different levels of human existence, including social relationship, social organization, cultural performance, and cultural representation. This is clearly demonstrated by works in this volume. Wang Ting-yu and Liu Biyun, studying Tibetan and Qiang communities respectively, both show how native traditional social organizations, having confronted and adapted to the influence of the imperial state and the modern nation state, still remain part of the contemporary local social life. In negotiating between tradition and modernity, they have come up with a way of life “that is actually a distinctively rural and indigenous form of modernity” (35). Ho Zhao-hua and Chien Mei-ling’s articles both examine the metamorphosis of cultural expressions and representations in the process of becoming modern in Miao communities, Shidong and Fangf Bil in Guizhou. The prevalent theme of the tension between individuals and society in the love songs of Fangf Bil demonstrates that individualism, as a definite component of the Western version of modernity, has always been in the consciousness of the local people, who “construct[ed] ‘individuality’ and ‘modernity’ in their own terms, both in their lives and performatively” (114). For Shidong Miao women, their incorporation

of Chinese characters, a symbol of modernity, is not a simple replication. They use these characters in their own particular ways reflecting their own culture. “They have used clothing to write their own culture and history” (89).

An important theme that some chapters in this volume highlight is the role of human subjectivity and agency in the reproduction and transformation of tradition and modernity. Futuru C. L. Tsai’s chapter reveals the hybridity of tradition and modernity in dances of young Amis. Dances were used to fulfill traditional duties, but these dances are not simple reproductions of what has been passed on from previous generations. Tradition is reproduced and transformed through the subjectivity of young Amis. Elements of outside cultural expressions were appropriated to “represent the performance of subjectivity and identities blended with the global flows of music and dance movements under the specific sociocultural environment of A’tolan Amis” (175). This subjectivity also transformed foreign cultural expressions to serve the purpose of cultural reproduction of Amis. Li-Ju Hong’s research on a Paiwan community in Taiwan examined the conflicts of subjectivity of different stakeholders in the interpretation of the past to serve the purposes of the present. What seems to be conflicting versions of social history actually represents contestations for social status in the present. In this way “the interplay between individuals in Paiwan society and history is essentially being ‘rewritten’” (193). Yajoi Mitsuda, following the successful story of Thao being recognized as an ethnic group, shows the agency of the local people in their negotiation with state polity for the recognition of their minority status. Even though the state tends to essentialize ethnic identity and ethnic boundaries, choosing the right elements to redefine the fluid and ambiguous cultural boundaries was the key strategy leading to this success.

Eveline Bingaman’s chapter demonstrates how the notion of culture is interpreted differently in different discourses of tradition and modernity. UNESCO’s discourse of World Cultural Heritage envisions culture as static and bounded, thus opposing cultural heritage preservation to development and commercialization. But from the local people and government’s perspectives, the value of being on the list of the World Cultural Heritage lies in the economic opportunities that such a status brings. Such different discourses of culture and cultural heritage have led to conflicts between UNESCO and local government as to how to manage the Lijiang Old Town as a World Cultural Heritage site.

As the editors state in the preface to this volume, the article by Chang Kuei-min is the only one in this volume that is not on minorities. But rural migrants, living as outsiders in hostile urban spaces, occupy a social space of no less otherness than national minorities. But at the same time, the urban space gives peasants mobility in their resistance to the one-child policy. The urban space becomes a social space for the state and migrant women to contest for control over the latter’s bodies, especially in terms of childbirth.

Covering such a broad range of social and cultural phenomena, chapters in this volume need good introduc-

tory and concluding chapters to hold them together as a theoretically and thematically meaningful body of scholarly works. With insightful observations that give these case studies some theoretical depth that many of them otherwise lack, the “Introduction” and the “Afterword” by the editors have generally achieved this purpose. The “Introduction,” surveying general scholarship on tradition and modernity as well as social, economic, and political transformations in other parts of the world, put case studies in this volume in broader theoretical and thematic contexts. The “Afterword,” using Goffman’s (1974, 1979, 1981) terms of “key” and “footing” to illustrate the processes of social and cultural performance, has tried its best to provide a coherent theoretical framework for the whole book. But lack of correspondence between “Introduction” and “Afterword” seems to have compromised the effectiveness of this effort.

I am impressed by the excellent ethnographic researches that these scholars have done, especially considering the fact that most of them were still PhD students when the book was published. Even though most of the case study chapters are not theoretically rich, they do provide thought-provoking cases for us to rethink what tradition and modernity means in different cultural, social, and political contexts.

Even though Wang Ting-yu and Liu Biyun’s researches have been conducted in contexts where the minorities and the Han Chinese live side by side with each other, there is insufficient account of interactions between the Han and the minorities. Since the Han Chinese carry with them one version of modernity that these minorities are confronting, incorporating, and modifying, lack of sufficient account of the interactions between agents of two cultures makes the stories seem only half told.

Overall, this volume is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the experience of tradition and modernity by different people in different social, cultural, and political contexts. It is a book worth reading, especially for those who are examining the meeting of tradition and modernity in East Asian societies.

Zhifang Song

Wimmer, Andreas: *Ethnic Boundary Making. Institutions, Power, Networks.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 293 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-992739-5. Price: £ 16.99

Andreas Wimmer has written a compelling and ambitious account of how, when, where, and why ethnicity comes to matter. Going beyond simply refining certain constructivist insight about, for example, thick or thin ethnicity or blurred or bright boundaries, Wimmer provides a new “processual” theory of ethnicity that focuses on boundary making processes. The resulting text is comprehensive, covering issues of institutional context, power hierarchies, networks, and strategy. Moreover it is analytically impressive, as Wimmer seamlessly weaves together Bourdieusian insight on classification struggles, with Barthian understandings of boundary processes, and Weber’s assessment of group making.