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Learning to be Modern: Japanese Political Discourse on Education, by B.K. Marshall

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Of these three points, it is the second that is most fully developed. Building on the work of several Japanese and Chinese scholars and librarians, Fogel has examined hundreds of works in this genre, offering concise and sometimes critical descriptions of their contents. In so doing, Fogel has doubtless produced what will be the definitive English-language introduction to this material and an important reference for those doing research on Chinese regional and urban history. Those working on Japan will find added perspective on figures such as Natsume Soseki and Akutagawa Ryunosuke through their largely unknown writings on China.

At the same time, Fogel's bibliographic comprehensiveness makes for rather tough going in spots. A series of paragraph-length descriptions of what otherwise unknown Zen priests, military officers, or representatives of provincial trade associations had to say about China rapidly becomes tedious, especially because, as it turns out, much Japanese writing about China had very little new to say. As Fogel points out, for many writers, going to the same places and recounting the names of previous Japanese visitors to the same spot was an all-too-large part of the genre.

Longer quotations from those who did have something novel or penetrating to say would have given this work a more general appeal. Some of the few women writers in this genre had an eye for aspects of contemporary China missed by the often more formulaic male writers. Similarly, businessmen seem to have "shown a sense of openness and a regard for equitable dealings with the Chinese unsurpassed in the medium of travel writing, as well as a respect for the continuity of Sino-Japanese friendship" (p. 242). This is in line with my own reading of accounts in Japanese trade papers and business magazines but at odds with the picture of Japanese businessmen active in China presented in left-wing Japanese scholarship. As Fogel shows, many leftists viewed contemporary China and its degradation through formulas that, without much adjustment, fit into the grand scheme of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Again, more quotations and cross-comparison would have shown the significance of travel literature for Japanese thought in these years.

Similarly, Fogel's argument that the Japanese coupled an admiration for ancient China to an ambivalence toward contemporary China and Chinese, although interesting, is inherently incomplete. This pattern of thought was reflected in travel writing, but it had its greatest impact in the gross inability of politicians and their intellectual advisors, especially during the Konoe years, to understand contemporary Chinese nationalism. A more explicit discussion of the possible linkages between attitudes in the travel literature and Japanese policy toward China would show the potential of this literature as a source for new insights on Japanese thought.

Finally, it would have added to the work to have had some discussion of post-World War II Japanese travel writing on China. After the war, "friendship missions"

to China were much in vogue. Although these missions were often couched in a mixture of atonement and a desire to make up for past misreading of China, it is not clear that travelers were any more objective or any less free of cultural and ideological conceits than when they had visited China on all-expenses-paid trips courtesy of the Japanese military or the South Manchurian Railroad. Being naive and subject to governmental blandishments is not a peculiarity of Japanese intellectuals. Fogel notes in his conclusion the now embarrassing readiness of American leftist scholars to go to China during the Great Cultural Revolution and see what their hosts wished them to see. Rather more development of this theme would have provided useful reminders of the ease with which intellectuals and scholars who imagine themselves to be objective can and do easily lose that objectivity for both left and right-wing regimes.

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BYRON K. MARSHALL. *Learning to Be Modern: Japanese Political Discourse on Education*. (New Perspectives on Asian History.) Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1994. Pp. xv, 320. Cloth \$69.95, paper \$24.95.

This is the first substantial survey of modern Japanese education in thirty years. It is not a treatment that will satisfy education professionals looking for teaching tips. Byron K. Marshall acknowledges that he does not deal with such issues as internal school organization, teacher training, or comparative pedagogy. Those hoping to learn the intricacies of day-to-day operations, lesson plans, or teacher-student interaction will have to look elsewhere. Marshall is concerned with the struggle among elites to situate education within Japan's modern society. His thoughtful treatment links ideas and ideologies with the changing institutional arrangements of Japan's modern education system.

Marshall examines the legal and administrative underpinnings of that evolving system as well as a number of its key features, including education tracking, the mechanisms of central control, and textbook selection procedures. The evolution of a variety of types of schools—including colleges and universities, technical schools, and training programs for women—is treated with care. This discussion constitutes the best overview currently available and is thus a welcome addition to the literature on the institutional development of Japanese education.

The value of Marshall's work is enhanced by his analysis of the intellectual and ideological debates that shaped Japanese educational institutions. In constructing an education system and providing a curriculum for it, Japan's leaders faced a recurring problem: to what degree could foreign ideas and values be incorporated without undermining or destroying indigenous values. Marshall observes that the "Japanese elite had committed itself to eclectic borrowing from abroad while

preserving cultural traits deemed essential" (p. 88). The problem with this formulation, of course, is what was essential and who was to make the decision. These issues were at the core of the early Meiji contests (between the supporters of westernization, nativists, and Chinese scholars) to shape and guide the creation of a modern system of education. The problem was not resolved in the Meiji period and continued to color education policymaking into the post-World War II period. The current debate, therefore, over the ethical purposes of education and its moral content has been at the center of policymaking discussions from the beginnings. As elsewhere, the moral meaning of education in Japan is freighted with extraordinary political significance, and Marshall gives this important problem the attention it deserves.

Marshall's center-oriented approach proves an excellent strategy for understanding the superstructure of Japan's education history. Education is fitted nicely into the larger enterprise of Japanese modern state building and, indeed, is made to illuminate that process. By choosing to ignore the mechanics of instruction delivery, however, an opportunity to tie process to product may have been missed. For example, we learn much about how textbooks are selected for public schools and the legislation authorizing that process but almost nothing about their content. What students did or did not learn and the moral messages that were directed at them are surely connected to the political debate about the system and its ideals. To learn how would have been useful.

Having made that point, it remains to be said that this is a first-rate general history of education and its place in Japan's modern history. It will be a worthy text for courses in modern Japanese history and comparative education, and students and their instructors will learn much from it.

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GRAHAM SAUNDERS. *A History of Brunei*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1994. Pp. xx, 212. \$39.95.

This is a solid work of regional history of the type we have come to expect from Oxford University Press. Graham Saunders is a long-time resident of Brunei and has an exceptional feel for and understanding of its society and culture. The book stems largely from a careful and discriminating use of the work of many researchers and writers. For the earliest periods, it is heavily dependent on the work of Robert Nicholl, a Brunei colleague to whom Saunders dedicates the volume.

The narrative opens with the now standard discussion of early Southeast Asian kingdoms. Early chapters on pre-Islamic Brunei and the coming of Islam are highly speculative and contain some rather dubious suggestions; for example, that Brunei was the site of exile of Funan royalty after their subjugation by Chenla (pp. 19-20), and that Brunei "might have

expected to have succeeded Malacca as the major Malay trading power" (p. 48), ignoring the claims of Johore and Aceh. Much of such speculation ignores the views of earlier historians such as D. G. E. Hall and George Coedes.

In analyzing the early periods, Saunders attempts to balance the national myths and legends of a state presently bent on inventing its own past with the logic of a factual account, however scarce and thin the sources may be. He succeeds marvelously in walking such a political tightrope.

Saunders is most convincing in chapters (six through nine) covering events of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Here the sources are voluminous, and he makes good use of standard secondary works on the three-way rivalry of Sarawak (the Brooke raj), Brunei, and North Borneo (the Chartered Company). He measures the "decline" and near extinction of Brunei in terms of the attempts, usually successful, of the other two to absorb Brunei territories, until by 1906 the state was a tiny, 2200-square-mile entity. In these pages, Saunders does display a slight anti-Sarawak sentiment, perhaps to counter a perceived pro-Sarawak stance in much of the work of nineteenth and twentieth-century writers.

The establishment of a British residency of the Brunei protectorate in 1906 began the slow modernization of the state. The exploitation of oil and gas resources from 1929 on made possible the rapid reincarnation of an ancient sultanate. The last three chapters detail Brunei's brief flirtation with constitutional government and the electoral process, the end of the British residency, and the early years of independence. These pages convey first-hand observations from the author's years as an education officer in Sarawak and Brunei.

In spite of Saunders's feel for society and culture in Brunei, there is little social and cultural content in the book. It is a political history of the rise and decline of a Muslim sultanate that in this century has achieved wealth from oil and remains a feudal autocracy much given to ostentation and self-indulgence. The book, like the state, is "sultan centered" and sees events from within Brunei in a somewhat parochial light. Nevertheless, it is a welcome addition to the literature on Brunei, for it brings together in a delightfully readable form recent research that has not been widely disseminated.

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SANDRA TWEEDIE. *Trading Partners: Australia and Asia 1790-1993*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press; distributed by ISBS, Portland, Ore. 1994. Pp. 262. \$29.95.

In the mid-1990s, there is increasing attention in Australia to its future in the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, Sandra Tweedie's new book is a timely addition to knowledge about Australia's trading rela-