

Let us disregard the problems inherent to the writing of any “genesis,” and welcome this challenging, well-documented overview of Chinese history between the dates given in the title. This reviewer knows of no better introduction to the subject. The numerous footnotes support almost all the statements and allow the reader further exploration.

Lest this review become an unmitigated encomium, let me point out that the author’s comparisons between China and Rome are not always fortunate. For example, the continuity of Roman civilization was not as altogether broken as Holcombe would have it (119). We still use the script; Roman numerals and legal thinking are still with us; and the language lives on in the Romance languages. But Holcombe has written this book on East Asia, and he has done it well.

This meticulous and fascinating book rests on an impressive range of sources, primary as well as secondary. Holcombe belongs to the small group of American East Asianists who not only use Chinese and Japanese, but also French and German works, and are ready to ferret out publications of difficult access. Yet in the abundant and careful bibliography, one looks in vain for the works of Marcel Granet, whose vision of the creation and character of the Middle Kingdom may have provided the learned author with some further insights.

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Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India. By Sanjay Joshi. (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001. Pp. xiii, 209. \$29.95.)

Historians have long recognized the importance of India’s middle class in shaping modern Indian society under British rule, delivering it from that rule, then providing leaders for India and Pakistan since independence. What has received less focus is the nature and behavior of this middle class as a social group, particularly during the period of British occupation. Sanjay Joshi addresses this issue by focusing on Lucknow as a case study and by using a variety of primary sources (both published and unpublished) to argue that “the middle classes in colonial north India were constituted not by their social and economic standing, but through public-sphere politics” (2). Having thus claimed the contingency of public participation for India’s middle class, he goes on to demonstrate it by devoting a chapter to each of four different aspects of middle-class behavior in Lucknow’s public sphere: its rise to dominance over other groups, its attempt to fuse traditional Indian and Victorian-British concepts of appropriate behavior between the sexes, its transformation and exaltation of religion, and its influence over forms of nationalist resistance to British rule. For each of these aspects of resulting “modernity,” Joshi points out the emergence of contradictory values that “fracture” it in the resulting public discourse: 1) the middle class’s claim to represent all residents of Lucknow while distancing itself from the city’s lower classes; 2) its simultaneous promotion of women’s participation in the public sphere and “husband worship” at home; 3) its denunciation of the religious justifications for caste while it exacerbated caste distinctions in other ways; and

4) its simultaneous promotion of plural secular and exclusive Hindu nationalism (172).

Joshi should be congratulated for fixing one of the central problems of much post-colonial scholarship: the lack of agency among the colonized. Lucknow's middle-class citizens are the central actors in this study, creating for their own purposes a distinctly Indian version of modern society by drawing simultaneously on colonial and "traditional" examples. Perhaps equally important, however, is Joshi's discussion of the basis of middle-class consciousness. By rejecting the importance of the social and economic foundations of Lucknow's middle class and opting instead for their self-identification in contrast to other groups, he applies some of the analytical methods of postcolonial critique to solve the riddle of how a genuine middle class could emerge in a preindustrial economy. For Joshi, the middle class is a cultural instead of a social or economic group. The author uses his findings to explain not only the emergence of a modern middle class in colonial northern India, but also the behavior of this class in modern Indian society and politics.

Fractured Modernity is easier to read than many theoretical monographs, but it is definitely aimed at scholars and is probably most suitable at the graduate level and above. Nevertheless, this thought-provoking and original book deserves to reach a scholarly audience beyond specialists in India. Joshi's analysis may also apply to middle classes outside South Asia.

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Japan: A Modern History. By James L. McClain. (New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company, 2002. Pp. xxiii, 632, appendices. \$35.00.)

From the politics of Tokugawa Ieyasu becoming shogun in 1603, to the societal problems of juvenile delinquency and teenage prostitution that plagued Japan in the late 1990s, the author of this study presents a thorough and vivid picture of Japan. James L. McClain distills an impressive cross-section of the latest historiography into lucid prose without greatly compromising the complexity of the literature upon which he relies, as he presents the political, social, and economic history of modern Japan in a captivating and fluid manner. With intriguing detail of events and lengthy biographies of a myriad of historical figures, including "[f]eisty tenants and disgruntled labor, intrepid feminists and radical students, seething minorities and outcasts," McClain brings the dynamic history of modern Japan to life (389).

The book is composed of seventeen chapters divided into five roughly equal parts. "Part I: Traditional Japan" examines the Tokugawa polity while, at the same time, discussing events and issues from earlier periods of Japanese history, such as the imperial system, that are critical to understanding modern Japan. In the five chapters that comprise "Part II: Japan in Revolutionary Times," McClain scrutinizes the issues and personalities of the Meiji Restoration that transformed Japan into a modern state. "Part III: Japan in the New Century" examines Japan's acquisition of empire and the relative social and political liberalism of the 1910s and 1920s,