peasants were seen as "ignorant" by the intellectuals, the book quoted Peng Pai, a pioneer peasant movement leader, as saying "the peasants were incapable of organization and ignorant." I would hope the book has brought in the historical context through which Peng Pai made the above statement; otherwise it could easily lead to misunderstanding and wrong interpretation. Instead of using the "cut-and-paste" method to extract short quotes from a variety of intellectuals to document the book's arguments, a better way is to focus on a few influential or representative intellectuals, present their writings and discourses in full details, so the readers can draw their own conclusions.

Finally, I hope the book can explain how and why the peasant discourse of the intellectuals has changed over time. It is nice if the book could bring in more discussion on the changing historical context (economic, political, and social conditions) of the twentieth century. In other words, although the book says it intends to be merely "a history of theories" rather than "a history of movements." My argument is that it needs to do both tasks, i.e., to present both a history of theories and a history of movements in order to provide a better understanding of how intellectuals' peasant discourse emerged, interacted with one another, and transformed in the first part of the twentieth century. Without a better understanding of the historical context, it is hard to make sense on the meaning, the significance, and the transformation of the peasant discourse in the early twentieth-century China.

However, despite the above critical comments, I want to point out that I completely agree with the central argument of the book, i.e., the intellectuals' peasant discourse was very much influenced by their nationalist concern. It is indeed the calling to rescue the Chinese nation that draws the intellectuals to the peasantry. The book also has done an excellent job in presenting the complexity of the debate on the nature of Chinese rural society. All in all, the book is very well-researched, and has made a significant contribution to our understanding of the concerns, the aspirations, and the political programmes of the intellectuals in the early twentieth-century China.

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Gutenberg in Shanghai: Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876–1937. By Christopher A. Reed. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004. Pp. xvii + 391pp. CDN$85.00 cloth, CDN$29.95 paper.

In *Gutenberg in Shanghai,* Christopher Reed provides a necessary and most welcome study of the modernization of Chinese printing technologies and the emergence of print capitalism in China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is a fascinating and meticulously researched study on China's reaction towards the advent of Western print technologies and the establishment of a specifically Chinese print capitalism. It is an important contribution to the growing literature on Late Qing culture as Reed aims at studying the reciprocal influences of mental and material culture, instead of seeing China's

modernity as a mere cultural phenomenon (p. 257). In clarifying his understanding of Benedict Anderson's popular notion of "print capitalism," Reed argues that mechanization "laid the material foundation that made Chinese print capitalism possible" and is the principle defining character of print capitalism (p. 9). He convincingly shows how Shanghai became the unquestioned geographical centre for printing and publishing in China as the "merger of the three worlds of Chinese print culture, commerce and capitalism" (p. 11).

In the first chapter "Gutenberg's Descendants: Transferring Industrialized Printing Technology to China, 1807–1930," Reed explains in great technological detail the problems early protestant missionaries had to tackle with when producing acceptable metal types for Chinese characters in the early nineteenth century; electrotype process was introduced but could not solve the printer's problems of producing aesthetically appealing characters. Chapter 2, "Janus-Faced Pioneers: The Golden Age of Shanghai's Lithographic Printer-Publishers, 1876–1905," deals with the following advent of lithography in China from 1876 onwards, which brought the fundamental change into the print industry through mechanization. On one hand it allowed for appealing aesthetic reproduction at lower costs and in greater quantity than woodblock printing. On the other hand, Reed argues, it became the first form of capitalist form of production since it involved huge print-shops and a great numbers of workers. These printer-publisher are called Janus-faced by Reed, because albeit their innovative adaptation to new technologies he characterises them as conservative in their cultural outlook with their main output being traditional literature, novels, examination handbooks, etc. As is set out in the third chapter "'Scooty Sons of Vulcan': Forging Shanghai's Printing Machinery, 1895–1937," the full-fledged form of print capitalism, however, developed only when Chinese printers recurred to comprehensive lead-type printing now being able to produce and maintain their own machinery, and most of all, to produce fonts that were culturally acceptable to the Chinese élite. Chapter 4, "'The Hub of the Wheel': Commerce, Technology, and Organizational Innovation in Shanghai's New-Style Publishing World, 1876–c.1911," deals with new forms of organization and management the new élite had created which fostered the development of copyright and industrial trade associations. The last chapter 5 "'The Three Legs of the Tripod': Commercial Press, Zhonghua Books, and World Books, 1912–37" introduces the three major players in the publishing sector of Republican China which shaped and dominated Shanghai's cultural field (*wenhuajie*).

In short, Reed narrates the history of technological transfer in three stages: imitation, adaptation and finally transformation of Western technologies. At first, Chinese printers imitated Western print technologies and the printing press from Western missionaries, but then had to adapt the technology to certain Chinese cultural preferences, i.e. the preference of calligraphic aesthetics in favour of quantity and speed since 1876. Only with the Chinese printer's increasing capability to produce and maintain their own letterpress machinery in the late nineteenth century and develop metal fonts with calligraphic quality, full-fledged print capitalism in form of mass production of books for economic profit could gain foothold in China. By this, the Chinese printers gained independence from foreign equipment and beat the foreigners at their own game.

Such a narrative mainly reveals the — by all means commendable — effort to re-establish Chinese agency in the process of global technological transfer in order to show

"that selective and deliberate use of Western technology and evolving traditional values enabled Chinese to engage the West constructively" (p. 257). However, it is not always convincing in the historical detail presented and perhaps at times oversimplifies a rather complex process of transcultural negotiation.

Whereas many of his observations for the twentieth century can be agreed upon, and it is especially here that Reed is able to rely on archival resources of the Shanghai Municipal Archive, historical accounts on printing and publishing of the early nineteenth century must remain speculation to a large extend. This is mainly due to scarcity of archival material on this period, and indeed, Reed admits that his specific perspective is one "through the eyes of Chinese commentators of the 1920s and 1930s" (p. 22). For historians interested in details of printing in the nineteenth century this must be disappointing, since it is this generation of historian like Zhang Jinglu, Ge Gongzhen and others which have distorted some of the facts of Chinese print history for ideological reason or lack of knowledge. As Reed sometimes too readily follows their accounts, historical inaccuracies creep into his text, such as the assumption that the London Missionary Press sold its press to its former printer Huang Sheng (p. 42), whereas it was bought by Chen Aiting, a journalist who also worked for the British government in Hong Kong. Huang Sheng is an interesting example to challenge one of the major arguments made in this book, namely that Chinese printers rejected printing presses for cultural reason, i.e. a preference for aesthetic appeal. The seemingly convincing argument is repeated time and again but unfortunately not substantiated enough by evidence.

From correspondences in the Archive of the London Missionary Society (LMS) we know that Huang Sheng was experimenting in developing electrotype processes in Hong Kong in order to be able to compete with the Meihua shuguan in Shanghai, where Gamble had developed the technology in the late 1850s. He had also planned to set up his own workshop for type casting, as the profit of the LMS society had received came from type founding and the sale of sets of matrices and letters — which indeed suggests a high demand and acceptance of this printing technique. Moreover, in 1872, Huang Sheng had produced his own set of matrices, which he intended to donate to the Emperor in Beijing. Huang would certainly never have intended to do so it if this technology was seen as culturally inferior and not appealing. In the end, the plan was not put into effect because Eitel, then head of the Hong Kong LMS, prevented him by arguing this would diminish the actual value of their matrices which they planned to sell to the Zongli Yamen and successfully did in 1873.

The Chinese Printing Co Ltd. (Zhonghua yinwu zongju) founded by Chen Aiting as the successor of the LMS printing office advertised in 1874 that with their new matrices they would be able to print all forms of literature, business forms, pedigrees or new years picture in a much finer quality then any other woodblock print-shop which again undermines the argument of the overall acknowledgement that the prints of the press were inferior to woodblock prints. Chinese interest in Western print technology was intense, and for more than aesthetic reason. Printing was from very early on seen as the main factor triggering the powerful rise of Western nations, as can be demonstrated through numerous newspaper articles since the 1870s. An important factor for making this relation lies in the fact that most of the early printers-publishers were not only book publishers but editors of magazines and newspapers. Chinese print development was crucially linked to the development of a mass

market of dailies and magazines, where most of technological innovation took place. Improving the print technology and expanding the market for print products was motivated by the desire to educate readers, spread knowledge about the West and search for new paths to reform China in the speediest way. This desire was shared by many of the early Chinese printer-publishers as Huang Sheng, Wang Tao or others and the missionaries, like Young Allen, John Fryer, Timothy Richards with whom they closely cooperated and whose interest quickly shifted from purely religious matters to disseminate scientific knowledge and foster China's reform. Collections of newspaper articles would become bestsellers on the market when published in bookform, as the *Zhongdong zhanji benmo,* which is based on clippings from the *Wanguo gongbao* on the Sino-Japanese war, all printed in letter press.

Since the 1870s with the establishment of institutions to produce and spread new knowledge through translations, textbooks, magazines and newspapers a network of Chinese *and* foreign reform oriented literati, officials, business men and publishers emerged, which could successfully maximize the efforts of individuals. At the same time, competition between firms and publishers did not always go along national lines, as suggested in Reed's book. The entanglement of different social segments in these publishing houses is also reflected by the fact that most early newspapers of the 1870s, like the *Xunhuan Ribao* in Hong Kong, *Shenbao* and *Xinbao,* were set up as joint stock companies, into which officials, entrepreneurs or other individuals jointly invested, whereas Reed attributes the emergence of this organizational form to a much later period in the twentieth century only.

If we recognize these earlier activities in letter press printing it is hard to follow Reed's argument about the failure of lithographic printing after a brief prime time from 1876 to 1895 as many of the driving forces for exploring and expanding the capitalist print market, which he attributes to the period of the early twentieth century as the real motor for Chinese print capitalism, have been at work already in the nineteenth century. The distinction between the technologies made here is perhaps necessary to provide a coherent argument, however it at times seem too artificial against the backdrop of cultural, technological and social diversity and complexity.

However, such controversial points do not diminish the overall value and importance of this book which is a fascinating account of how cultural, technological, political and economic factors mutually interacted in the rise of Chinese print capitalism. It is important also as it successfully draws our attention to the actual material factors that shape and inform cultural production, and which are mostly overlooked in studies on cultural change in Late Imperial China. It is fascinating in showing how China's print capitalism from its beginning operated in a global context, reacted towards it as well as transformed it. It is rich and full of historical details built on a wide range of sources. In this, it is a major step in exploring Chinese publishing in Late Qing and should come to the attention of anyone interested in modern Chinese history.

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