in table 10.1 in the Weekes et al. (p. 175) article include strokes, and also characters with miscounted strokes, and also contain an ostensible pseudocharacter that in fact actually occurs, both suggesting that stimuli critical to the experimental results may not have been carefully chosen.

There are also a number of production omissions and errors. English glosses are often glaringly absent, a major inconvenience for nonreaders of Chinese, Japanese, or Korean. Table 11.3 is missing even though it is cited (p. 199), and an article by Feng and Zhou is cited (p. 226) but not listed in the references. Also, Chinese characters for certain words are either missing (the *hancha* for "more, add" on page 303) or incorrect (the *kanji* for "definition" on page 411). Finally, given the title of the book, we might expect to see more contributions involving Japanese and Korean.

Despite these relatively minor shortcomings, the book represents a valuable addition to the field and would be of interest to nonspecialists wanting to know how East Asian linguistic studies contribute to the important and rapidly expanding domain of cognitive science. The volume may be somewhat variable in quality, but it achieves a higher standard than its predecessors and is a major step in the right direction.

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The Empire of the Text: Writing and Authority in Early Imperial China. By CHRISTOPHER LEIGH CONNERY. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1998. xv, 208 pp. $65.00 (cloth); $22.95 (paper).

Christopher Leigh Connery insists that this book is an experiment (pp. 6, 7, passim). The experiment, as I understand it, is to write a history of "the textual scene"—that is, the "Empire of the Text"—with reference to social structures and material circumstances and without reference to prior subjectivity (p. 9). His is not simply an argument that political and textual authority are coterminous, but that textual authority is constituted with its own "logic and ordering principles" (p. 7).

Connery's experiment leads the reader into fascinating and sometimes difficult terrain. Here are four central arguments of this book that are all likely to provoke scholarly discussion and response:

1. The Empire of the Text was a self-contained world of textuality that identified itself without reference to a world of orality. Indeed, literary sinitic, as it is "created" during the Han, precludes the oral as anything other than "an inferior or negative version of the textual" (p. 42).

2. The *shi* (I will still call them "scholar-bureaucrats," even though Connery shows how problematic a label such as this can be) are the primary population of the Empire of the Text and were both producers of and, in an important sense, produced by texts.

3. In contrast to the view that "friendship" is a product of *shi* cultural production, Connery argues that during the latter Han "There was no dissent from the view that partisanship and 'unofficial' relationships were dangerous and were to be avoided" (p. 118). Official life was constructed textually as a replication or, at least, as an analogue to the family and this marginalized homosocial relationships as politically disruptive.

4. Western study of Chinese literature has for the most part limited itself to a few genres, rarely considering such official forms as "memorials," "edicts," and "petitions," which are treated as fully literary in the earliest Chinese writings on

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literature. In addition, Western study of Chinese poetry often has been constructed primarily around the subjectivity of a "creating consciousness" (p. 131). This latter tendency has led, for example, to an interpretation of the Jian'an poets that divorces them from their textual and social context. Connery argues that poets have been misread, that "belletristic writing demanded anthologizing, and that its composition and reception practices militated against the isolatibility of the individual lyric" (p. 159).

Connery's arguments, which always deserve careful attention, are built upon two pillars: first, a meticulous and judicious use of sinological scholarship, the latter an issue we will return to presently; and second, a profound engagement with theory. Not all readers, I suspect, will find each of these dimensions of his work equally engaging. At times I became lost while reading the more purely theoretical pages (for example, pp. 21–33). But almost all readers, I am quite certain, will be stimulated and challenged at some point by Connery's impressive scholarly achievement.

Particularly intriguing, at least for this reader, is Connery's insistence, central to his argument throughout, that the Empire of the Text, as it takes shape in the early Han, recognizes no world of orality. Thus, Connery doubts the usefulness of Eric Havelock's study on the "oral/literary" dichotomy in "a China that always gave discursive prominence to the textual" (p. 51). Much more could be said on this problematic issue. We might begin by asking why the Empire of the Text was so insistent upon its essentially closed textual identity. What thesis generated this particular antithesis? William Boltz's brilliant history of Chinese script, used prominently in Connery's work, argues that the normativizing of Chinese script during the Han, which culminated in Xu Shen's *Shuo wen jie zi*, effectively blocked an earlier tendency toward the development of a syllabary. Such a development, had it continued, would perhaps have given the script a much more transparent link to the world of orality. Precisely what was at stake in this early script reform? My point is that the Empire of the Text must have been a reaction to something. Some perspective on this issue might be provided by a fascinating and, I think, somewhat tangled passage in *Shi ji*. Sima Qian (or perhaps his father) is writing here of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and the origin of the *Zuo Commentary*. Confucius, we are told, produced the terse, cryptic *Annals* in which the Kingly Way "was complete." Then,

> The group of seventy masters received the purport of a commentary by word of mouth. This was because words and passages that ridicule, proclaim the taboos, or repress and do harm cannot appear in a text. The Princely Man of Lu, Zuo Qiuming, feared that all the disciples would go astray, each relying on his own understanding and would lose the true accounts. Thus, he relied upon Confucius' historical records, he completely discussed its teachings, and he completed the *Spring and Autumn Annals of Master Zuo*.
>
> (*Shi ji*, ch. 12, pp. 508–9)

This passage is, of course, much more an early Han conception than an accurate historical record of the origin of Zuo Commentary (although, properly read, it might tell us something on the latter question as well . . . but that is another story). What does this passage say to us that might be relevant to Connery's work? First, Sima Qian presents the oral in this instance at least as entirely parasitic to a previous text. Second, there might be a legitimate place for the oral, at least in theory, as a sphere of discretion. In other words, writing is inherently public and thereby is meant to hide as much as to reveal. Third, the oral is inherently unstable and must, unfortunately

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Sima Qian seems to imply, be fixed through textuality. I should add, somewhat parenthetically, that this is precisely what *Shi ji* itself in some measure accomplished for we know that the Simas made ample use of oral accounts in producing their history, particularly for the period still accessible to direct or indirect human memory. But, all in all, Sima Qian's comments in the passage cited above carry more than a little ambivalence, perhaps even some anxiety, on the issue of orality— albeit a somewhat different type of orality than that discussed in Havelock.

There is ample evidence that the Empire of the Text is an act of containment, more or less successful, and we must continue to try to uncover precisely what forces were being contained. In a way, this is what Connery himself wishes to do in his concluding, and very fascinating, "humanist fantasy" (pp. 169–70).

A final cautionary word. Much of Connery's experiment is portrayed as reading against the sinological grain. There is assuredly no reason why sinology, any less than other traditional fields of study, should escape the deconstructive urge. (Tibetology has certainly taken it on the head recently.) But sinology can become something of a straw man (and, fortunately, the gender reference here is slowly becoming less accurate). I, for one, see little unity of vision these days among those who still have the courage to describe themselves as sinologists—and also little desire to exclude anyone from the club because of some deviant theoretical inclination. The Warring States Working Group, managed by Bruce Brooks, should provide evidence of how lively and varied contemporary sinology can be. So let me conclude with a compliment, not at all meant to be backhanded. Connery's book, whatever else it may be, is an excellent work of sinology that deserves our careful engagement.

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Maritime Sector, Institutions, and Sea Power of Premodern China. By GANG DENG. Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999. xix, 289 pp. $69.50.

Gang Deng sets out to show that, in contrast to frequent oversimplifications about the "continental" nature of the Chinese state and economy and its overdetermined weakness as a participant in naval confrontations and maritime trade, premodern China had a very considerable presence in the maritime world. This is not quite as novel a revision as Deng sometimes implies, but his energetic and erudite contribution to the discussion still is very much to be welcomed. Especially impressive is his inventive pursuit of data on backward and forward linkages of maritime trade, including many items that have not occurred to previous investigators, such as the constant need for iron nails and rivets for the construction and maintenance of ships and the items in the Chinese pharmacopoeia for which the sole sources were maritime imports. Whatever numbers are available, however tentative, are cited and analyzed. The range of Chinese materials consulted is very impressive, from standard histories and other old books to the most recent scholarship. Every scholar studying premodern maritime China will want to consult this book for its many citations and suggestions.

These scholars, however, will soon notice the limitations of this work. Deng's knowledge of the relevant scholarship in English, French, German, and Japanese, better grounded in relevant western-language sources and sometimes more sophisticated in analysis than the Chinese scholarship, is very spotty indeed: no

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