



Review: [Untitled]

Reviewed Work(s):

The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology by John Henderson
Benjamin Elman

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endless pages of data without amplification led me to check several of Jaggi's sources. In the process, I discovered that sources are acknowledged at the initial introduction of a topic or if the material is a direct quotation, but there is no continuing method of citation to let the reader know the material is still being derived from the same source. At times, sources are paraphrased and not acknowledged clearly, at times they appear in the text but not in the notes. Finally, incomplete citations frequently appear; indeed their location, format, and state of completeness vary from volume to volume.

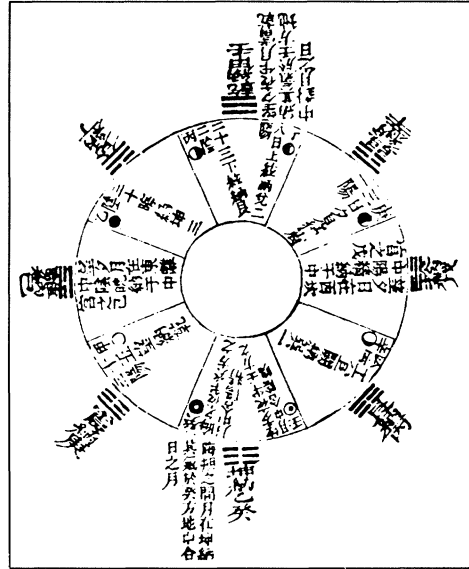
Jaggi has succeeded in his effort to provide a comprehensive overview of Western medicine in India. But while he makes us aware of the richness of the history of science, technology, and medicine in India, others must mine this wealth with greater depth, care, and consistency. Regretfully, we still await a work on science in India to equal Joseph Needham's study of Chinese science.

HELEN E. SHEEHAN

■ Far East

John Henderson. *The Development and Decline of Chinese Cosmology.* xv + 331 pp., illus., app., bibls., index. New York: Columbia University Press, 1984. \$32.50.

The main aim of John Henderson's book is to provide the general reader with a narrative account of the rise and fall of cosmology in China from the classical period to the seventeenth century, a time frame covering over two millennia of Chinese history. For the most part, Henderson succeeds admirably in his stated aim of identifying "some general patterns in the history of Chinese cosmological thought that are worthy of further investigation" (p. 257). The originality and significance of his contribution lies in his carrying the work of his predecessors (Joseph Needham, Derk Bodde, Nathan Sivin, *et al.*) further, thereby providing us with a major synthesis of source materials necessary to illuminate this central but understudied aspect of Chinese intellectual and scientific history. In the process, Henderson provides us with a convincing account of the emergence of an antic cosmological world view during the Ch'ing dynasty (1644–1911), which drew on earlier criticisms of



correlative correspondences between the social, political, and cosmological realms that Confucians had enunciated in the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–A.D. 220) and Sung dynasty (960–1279).

Because Henderson's synthesis encompasses such a large body of material, it would be easy to get lost in generalities. His command of the appropriate primary and secondary sources, however, is evident on almost every page, as he guides us from the technical aspects of Chinese cosmography to the overall significance of cosmology in the history of Chinese thought and science. Along the way, he repeatedly draws instructive parallels with Western cosmology and the history of science in Europe. The general reader will see in such comparisons a useful device to comprehend the peculiarities of the Chinese case. The specialist will benefit from a discussion prepared by a scholar who is comfortable with the history of science in Europe and China, as well as a professional historian of China.

Beginning with a summary of correlative thought (the drawing of systematic correspondences among aspects of various orders of reality) and geometrical cosmography (the division of space into regular rectilinear units) in early China, Henderson then summarizes what he considers "medieval" criticisms and extensions of cosmology in China. After reviewing the role of cosmology in the Neo-Confucian tradi-

tion, Henderson turns to his central problem: the intellectual origins and ramifications of the Ch'ing anticocosmological world view.

It is disappointing, however, that Henderson adopts a defensive posture when sifting through the possible reasons for the rise of an anticocosmological world view during the seventeenth century. External social, political, and economic factors, when discussed, are quickly set aside as inconclusive (pp. 90–92, 171–172, 231). Intellectual factors that may have influenced the “inner developmental logic” of correlative thought and its ultimate demise in seventeenth-century China, while taken more seriously, are in the end also deemed insufficient to explain fully the rise and fall of Chinese cosmology (p. 90). Rather than appealing to the likely interaction of many still inadequately understood factors in its development, Henderson instead concludes: “Indeed, who but Hegel’s owl of Minerva could fathom the internal dialectic of a mode of thought?” (p. 90). To be fair, Henderson does suggest that “the emergence of an anticocosmological world view in early Ch'ing thought may have been advanced by a vitalist, organicist strain in later Neo-Confucianism” (p. 234). But his frequent resort to unnecessary rhetorical statements (e.g., p. 206) mars his otherwise successful efforts to analyze and weigh the significance of the materials that he has woven together.

Fortunately, such limitations in second-order analysis do not prevent Henderson from providing us with an exciting narrative, full of penetrating insights and cross-cultural comparisons. More discussion of the nature of Neo-Taoist and Buddhist cosmology in China after the fall of the Han dynasty in A.D. 220 (p. 97), however, would have been useful. Had such alternative cosmologies been more fully covered, the links between Neo-Confucian cosmograms and Neo-Taoism would have been clearer. As Henderson notes, it was the Taoist provenance of the cosmograms to which Ch'ing Confucians objected and which led them to begin an across-the-board criticism of Neo-Confucian cosmology.

Finally, it may be the case that what Henderson calls “Chinese cosmology” can be better considered postclassical “elite Confucian cosmology.” Certainly his frequent use of Japanese Confucian materials

to corroborate the Chinese case (pp. 179, 184) suggests this possibility. Future research may shed more light on this issue. Moreover, the still poorly understood populist dimensions in China of cosmology and cosmography, which Johan Huizinga (*The Waning of the Middle Ages*) has described for us in medieval Europe, need to be further explored. Nonetheless, Henderson’s study represents a remarkable piece of scholarship and a powerful synthesis of available source materials. His book is an important contribution to both sinology and the history of science.

BENJAMIN ELMAN

James Reeve Pusey. *China and Charles Darwin.* (Harvard East Asian Monographs, 100.) xi + 544 pp., apps., bibl., index. Cambridge, Mass./London: Council of East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1983. Distributed by Harvard University Press. \$25.

In the history of modern Chinese thought, Charles Darwin has greatly influenced the traditional Chinese way of thinking. But there have been few specialized academic works tracing the impact of Darwin’s ideas upon China. James Reeve Pusey’s analysis of this topic in *China and Charles Darwin*, is consequently most welcome. In Part One of three parts, Pusey discusses the historical background of Darwinian theory and the process through which this theory was introduced into China in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In Part Two, he discusses the Reform Movement of 1895–1898 and the way the reformists utilized the theory of evolution as a scientific argument for reform. In Part Three, he analyzes the authoritative role of Darwinian ideas in the attempted overthrow of the last feudal dynasty in 1911 and the founding of the Republic in 1912 by republican revolutionaries.

Pusey’s book reflects the early history of the process of looking to Western philosophers for an ideological base for reform. Nevertheless, even though Darwin’s name first appeared in Chinese publications in the 1870s, his theory of evolution gained prominence only after the crisis of national subjugation provoked by the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895. Advanced intellectuals and philosophers such as K’ang Yu-wei, Liang Ch’i-ch’ao, T’an Ssu’tung, and especially Yen Fu turned to the West in