

This collection should encourage comparative historical study in North America, but not in the mechanist and discriptivist forms characteristic of some past work in the field. These authors' explanations do not depend on theories of underlying international "structures" and "forces," nor are the authors satisfied with detailed descriptions of local conditions and circumstances. They are driven, instead, by the *possibility* of comparison. Their questions and their arguments, taken together, show how the field of history of education has begun to renew itself.

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Kathleen L. Lodwick. *Educating the Women of Hainan: The Career of Margaret Moninger in China, 1915–1942*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995. Pp. xvi, 255. U.S.\$35.00 cloth.

Metropolitan scholars writing about colonial situations face a contradictory task. They can most easily access the experiences and historical records of the colonizers. Indeed, it can be the richness of these sources that stimulates their scholarly interest in the first place. However, these contexts cannot be fully understood without reference to the experiences of the colonized. *Educating the Women of Hainan* illustrates this dilemma. On the one hand, it is a highly successful biography of Margaret Moninger, an Iowa schoolteacher who worked as an American Presbyterian Church missionary in China for almost thirty years. On the other hand, the problematic nature of her experiences and activities in China, and the imperialist cultural assumptions that shaped them, are almost invisible.

Drawing upon a rich set of primary sources, Moninger's own detailed weekly letters home, Kathleen L. Lodwick creates a convincing and complex portrait of an educator/scholar of piercing intelligence and unshakable moral conviction. Arriving in China in 1915, Miss Moninger (as she insisted upon being called), quickly learned Mandarin Chinese and was posted to Hainan Island, off the southernmost coast of China. There she served in various missions as a schoolteacher, girls' school principal, and mission secretary. Moninger learned Hainanese, eventually publishing a Hainanese-English dictionary, and wrote several scholarly articles, including ethnographic studies of the aboriginal Miao people of the Hainanese interior. With the exception of two year-long furloughs back to the United States and several evacuations to Shanghai or Hanoi because of warlord invasions or communist-inspired

uprisings, she remained on Hainan until repatriated back to the United States by Japanese occupiers in 1942.

The complexity of Lodwick's portrait can be seen in her discussion of the missionary's religious calling. Moninger was initially drawn to missionary work as much out of a desire to be useful and for excitement as out of religious conviction. After leaving China for good in 1942, she wrote that she had fulfilled her ambition of going "where no white woman has ever been." Yet as she immersed herself in the work of the missions in which she served, her religious convictions seem to have deepened (to the point where their orthodoxy irritated some of her less devout colleagues). Still, she did not seem embittered by the fact that she had helped lead few people to Christ, as she had to admit after returning to the United States. For Lodwick, Moninger's motivations were not straightforward. Although evidently a serious, even severe, person, Moninger was not above self-satire. For example, while on an evangelizing trip to the Hainan interior, she knew that she would be an object of considerable curiosity to the local population. Rather than being dismayed by this, she decided to put on a good show, carefully choosing a brand of toothpaste that foamed excessively when she brushed her teeth.

Although Moninger spent most of her time as a schoolteacher/principal, we learn the least about this aspect of her career. Lodwick presents a number of anecdotes about the school and Moninger's students, but does not present an overall portrait of the school and its operations. Here I find the source of my considerable disquiet with this book. *Educating the Women of Hainan* is really about the American missionaries and their lives within their isolated compounds. It has relatively little to do with Hainan Island, let alone the women of Hainan or their education. Indeed, Chinese people and Chinese events appear as little more than a backdrop or as disruptions to the routine of mission life. For example, we learn of the considerable difficulties that Moninger and her colleagues experienced in keeping their schools operating in the face of Chinese government regulations forbidding the teaching of Christianity. At times, the missionaries circumvented this rule by getting the local magistrate to certify their degrees anyway. At other times the school could not be opened. Yet we also learn that many non-Christian parents (including officials) preferred to send their own daughters to Moninger's school rather than to Chinese government schools. But we learn nothing about these other schools, the Chinese regulatory authority, or the reasons for parental choices.

These failings are in part a reflection of Moninger's letters. Lodwick admits to having been "waylaid" by these sources from her original plan to write a history of the Presbyterian missions on Hainan. We certainly find enough samples of Moninger's writing to demonstrate why Lodwick would find her life so fascinating. However, like many another schoolteacher, Monin-

ger recorded the unusual rather than the routine when it came to her school. Further, she appears to have been uninterested in Chinese events and motivations, or at least (as Lodwick suggests) rarely discussed Chinese affairs because she did not want relatives left behind in the United States to worry.

But it is precisely an analysis of the imperialist nature of Moninger's experiences, down to the metropolitan and one-way gaze of her own moralizing letters home, that is missing from Lodwick's account. Moninger's unshakable faith, her moral certainty about the rightness of her American lifestyle as a model for China, even her occasionally caustic observations about her colleagues, are all products of an imperialist ethic. This in not to suggest that Lodwick is entirely blind to the colonial context. For example, in discussing Moninger's belief, apparently shared by other missionaries, that the mission school should instill American-style patriotism (even down to teaching students to sing "God Bless America") as well as Christianity, Lodwick acknowledges that Moninger "participated in the casual cultural imperialism of the mission without giving it much thought" (p. 46). Yet it is precisely the social relations involved in this imperialism that are missing from Lodwick's analysis. Nor does she canvass the primary and secondary Chinese-language sources that might provide some insight into these relations. The whole mission situation was the product and expression of European imperialism and the military force that underlay it. American missionaries could only be in Hainan because of unequal treaties forced on China by the foreign powers (to the detriment of millions) during the nineteenth century. As Lodwick demonstrates, once in Hainan, Moninger lived behind the high walls of a compound that separated and insulated her from China, and from her Chinese friends and the realities they faced. Her American lifestyle, down to her customary food, was maintained by a plentiful supply of Chinese cooks, housekeepers, and nannies. Her safety was protected by her white skin, extraterritoriality, and foreign gunboats in the harbour; there were, however, occasional threats to this safety which made for excitement. Most often the tragedy of twentieth-century China—famine, warlordism, brutal invasion—ntruded on this insular world as little more than inconvenient disruptions of regular supplies or perverse fluctuations of currency exchange rates. Lodwick does not analyze these phenomena adequately, nor does she address the material structures, cultural assumptions, and patriarchal norms that made becoming a missionary one of the few exciting occupations available for a university-educated and unmarried Anglo-American woman in the early-twentieth-century United States. The imperialist nature of the evangelical mission, its moralizing discourses, and its assumptions of monopoly on truth are also undiscussed.

These failings are all the more sad in light of the fact that Lodwick's study provides useful raw material to show that imperialism is a complex and essentially cultural process, and often perpetrated with the best of intentions. However appealing and worthy a subject Miss Moninger is for a biography in other respects, unless "casual cultural imperialism" is taken more fully into account, the central realities of her life and career remain to be analyzed.

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Robert F. Arnove. *Education as Contested Terrain: Nicaragua, 1979-1993*. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1994. Pp. 234. U.S.\$54.95 cloth.

This comprehensive and well-designed book analyzes educational changes in Nicaragua in two contrasting historical periods. The first is the Sandinista one that began with the triumph of the popular revolution in 1979. The second is the post-Sandinista, under the leadership of Violeta Chamorro, who took power in 1990 as a result of elections within the context of the U.S.-supported counter-revolutionary war. The underlying research theme is the role of education in the processes of political and economic transformation in Nicaragua. The scope of the research is enriched by the two contrasting historical projects that the two periods represent.

The author explores the role of education in the unfolding of the Sandinista popular, nationalistic, anti-imperialist, political project and of the new model of capitalist accumulation based on alternative social relations of production and mixed forms of ownership. He then examines the role of education in the counter-revolutionary transformative process led by Chamorro and the Union Nacional Opositora. Chamorro tried to reintegrate the country into the world capitalist economy, to accord priorities to market mechanisms, and to bring back values that had been questioned by the revolution (for example, traditional conservative Catholic values).

Historical reality has helped to make this book an interesting one, Chamorro and her right-of-centre coalition won by a margin of fourteen percentage points. The Frente Sandinista por la Liberación Nacional remained the single party with the largest number of votes. The setting generated conditions for fascinating contradictions and dialectical plays to dispute political spaces.

The book begins with a discussion of the Sandinista regime's aims and achievements: attempts at expansion and democratization and concomitant changes in the political culture; limitations and setbacks growing out of