Wu Hung
1989 *The Wu Liang Shrine: The ideology of early Chinese pictorial art.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

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CHINA

Knapp, Ronald G., editor. *Chinese Landscapes: The Village as Place.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992. xii + 313 pages. Maps, drawings, photographs, bibliography, index. Cloth US$46.00; ISBN 0–8248–1413–4.

Anthropologists and sociologists often regard villages as social units only, and their analyses of these communities are directed solely at clarifying human relationships and social organizations. Villages, however, are more than mere social entities. Their ecological environments, their layouts, and their physical structures (houses, temples, graveyards, bridges, etc.) all have a special meaning for the inhabitants. Thus when studying villages we must try to understand not only their social reality but also their socio-topological reality.

This collection on Chinese villages is a good example of a study that shows the reality of the village as a place. Jin Qiming and Li Wei, employing the criteria of settlement structure, natural environment, and economic activity, classify Chinese rural settlement patterns into three major systems in eleven basic regions. We are then given eighteen case studies done by anthropologists, architects, geographers, historians, sociologists, and a veterinary ecologist. These involve villages located in twelve of the mainland provinces, from Shanxi to Hainan and from Sichuan to Zhejiang. Also included are one village each from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The respective villages' spatial patterns are clarified within the wider perspective of the region's characteristics using maps, photographs, illustrations, and figures. We are given an enjoyable tour of the vast land of China, from the arid inland to a sunny island.

Also discussed is village *fengshui* (geomancy). *Fengshui* is an expression of the traditional Chinese notion that human alterations to the landscape affect the prosperity of the people in the vicinity. The Chinese still believe in the principles of *fengshui* and often use them in fortunetelling.

The village studies are divided into those that focus on tradition and those that focus on transition. Let us look at tradition first. The most important characteristic of the traditional village is, I believe, the close connection between the village community and the patrilineal system. Even the names of the villages reflect this connection: five of the eighteen villages studied are named after the dominant lineages (e.g., Xiqi village for the Xi lineage and Dangjia village for the Dang lineage).

Knapp writes that in most Chinese rural settlements the historical development process is rather difficult to trace. Great shifts in population may have occurred in any given area due to famine, warfare, or natural disaster, and communities may have formed several times on the same site. I believe, however, that the developmental pattern in these communities was roughly the same, based on the principle of the village founder proliferating his agnatic descendants. In this way the village as a whole can be regarded as an extension of the household, with the village community being like one large house divided into families. Xiqi village in Guangdong is a typical example. We also have Oliver Laude's description of a Hakka *tulou* residence in Hekeng, Fujian. *Tulou*, "earthen buildings," are multistoried fortlike structures that sometimes house twenty-five or thirty related families with a total of

150 people. Although the *tulou* is an exceptional case, it still provides an example of a protovillage formed by the extension of a household; it may also be seen as lying between the household and the village community. Village *fengshui* too is most clearly understood if village prosperity is seen to coincide with the good fortune of a particular lineage.

Next let us turn to the question of transition. The most important characteristic of transition in village communities is the movement toward heterogeneity or urbanization. In this process village communities become more than the extensions of households: various surnames are found, and there are many villagers who do not have close kinship ties. The processes of urbanization are manifold, and include population growth, transportation improvements, and shifts in the economic structure (both agricultural and nonagricultural). Much room exists for analyzing these developments in terms of the community's rational use of space. How, for example, does the residents' perception of space change as a result of urbanization? Can we interpret urban development in the premodern period in terms of *fengshui*?

A related issue is the changes that have occurred in settlement patterns since the advent of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. During its forty-five years in power the PRC government has distorted traditional patterns of village life; destroyed many distinctive houses, ancestral halls, and temples; and reorganized the inhabitants in line with their politico-economic policies. Thus in dealing with village communities in the PRC we are faced with the problem of deciding which changes are spontaneous local developments and which are the result of government action. Among the villages studied, Dazhai in Shanxi is the most typical example of a government-produced community; political fever was the motivating principle here, not traditional notions of how people should live. When considering post-1949 patterns of village transition, one probably gets a better idea of the natural course of development by examining communities in Taiwan and Hong Kong. More data on these areas would have been useful.

Chinese Landscapes is important for its treatment of the village as a socio-topological space. However, I would have liked to have had more information on the meanings attributed to particular places by the inhabitants of the community. For example, a restructured ancestral hall may be used for a factory, or a school, or a meeting place. We thus have to ask how the people now view the place: Is it still an ancestral hall in their imaginations, or is it just a factory? Perhaps the older people retain their former image of it while the younger people do not. Only by considering such questions can we come to understand socio-topological space as something defined by the inhabitants and their physical environment, and yet as something shaped also by the imagination of each individual. Socio-topological space is the amalgam of physical presence and imaginative existence; the nature of this amalgam can only be clarified through more interdisciplinary research.

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THAILAND

WALKER, ANTHONY R., editor. *The Highland Heritage: Collected Essays on Upland North Thailand*. Singapore: Suvarnabhumi Books, 1992. xvi + 434 pages. Maps, figures, tables, plates, index. Paper, n.p.; ISBN 981–00–2885–7.

The present collection contains twelve articles on the highland peoples of North Thailand, most of them based on fieldwork carried out in the 1970s. Ten of the pieces originally appeared in *Contributions to Southeast Asian Ethnography* between 1982 and 1988; one of the ten was substantially rewritten for this 1992 publication, while several others underwent