



Project
MUSE[®]
Scholarly journals online

pre-existing chiefdoms. Rather it represents a quantum developmental leap in a minor Longshan chiefdom in a relatively uncircumscribed and demographically static region.

Practically all these conclusions are highly debatable. It is hard to imagine anyone who would not find something in them to disagree with, so they will surely stimulate discussion. These are marks of the success of this book. Liu has not just summarized the conventional wisdom about the Chinese Neolithic, and one hopes archaeologists will be inspired by her insightful synthesis to conduct field projects so as to collect information in new and different ways. Examining potential flaws in the analysis that supports Liu's conclusions is worthwhile only because the conclusions really do matter. They concern central issues in our understanding of the emergence of the state (and complex societies more generally) in north China. *The Chinese Neolithic* clearly represents a great leap forward in applying to northern China tools and concepts appropriate to the anthropological study of early complex societies and in inserting north China into the global comparative study of early complex societies.

Robert D. Drennan

Robert D. Drennan is professor of anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh. His archaeological field investigation of chiefdoms has included Mexico, Colombia, and China.



Christine Loh and Civic Exchange, editors. *At the Epicentre: Hong Kong and the SARS Outbreak*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004. xxvii, 285 pp.

Hardcover \$39.50, ISBN 962-209-683-2. Paperback \$19.95, ISBN 962-209-684-0.

As time passes since the end of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in the summer of 2003, one finds more and more books published on SARS throughout the East Asia region.¹ These books cover the range of collective experience with SARS; provide scientific explanations of the epidemic for a lay audience; offer guidelines for citizens to protect themselves; criticize shortcomings in governmental, public health, and medical responses; and often conclude with policy recommendations to improve future responses to a comparable pandemic. Although most of this literature in the East Asia region is in Chinese, several regional assessments of SARS have been published in English in Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Hong Kong.²

Just a week after the World Health Organization (WHO) removed Hong Kong from their list of SARS-affected areas on June 24, 2003, over half a million Hong Kong citizens took to the streets in protest. The demonstration of July 1 happened on the holiday commemorating the sixth anniversary of the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997. It was second in size only to the Hong Kong demonstrations protesting the Tiananmen massacre in 1989. The convergence of mainland secrecy and censorship over SARS and the Tung administration's incompetence, indifference, and lack of accountability dealing with the SARS epidemic brought Hong Kong citizens to the boiling point. Although the protests were a direct response to the anti-subversion Article 23 of the Basic Law—which would have curtailed freedom of the press and freedom of information by instructing Hong Kong to enact legislation against treason, secession, sedition, subversion, and theft of state secrets “on its own”—SARS had revealed the political weaknesses and ideological dangers of the Special Administration Region system itself. *At the Epicentre: Hong Kong and the SARS Outbreak* takes the position that the lack of transparency from mainland officials directly contributed to over 1,700 SARS infections and 299 SARS related deaths in Hong Kong alone. Suddenly, the relatively abstract issues of freedom of the press and freedom of information became a concrete matter of life or death. The protests gained their force through widespread discontent with the Tung administration's mismanagement of the SARS crisis and with a renewed sense of vulnerability of Hong Kong as a Special Administration Region system bordering the “epicenter of new emerging viruses” in Guangdong province (p. 58).

The fourteen essays in *At the Epicentre* clarify the complex issues underlying this massive demonstration while simultaneously offering the best synthesis of Hong Kong's experience with SARS. By the end of 2004, East Asian government and civic institutions began to publish their own assessments of the SARS epidemic in their region. One of the earliest examples, *A Defining Moment: How Singapore Beat SARS*, is filled with color photographs, personal experiences, and moving accounts of victory. Commissioned by Singapore's Ministry of Information, Communications, and the Arts and published by the Singapore Institute of Policy Studies, this publication looks like a photo album and reads like a triumphal narrative.³ *At the Epicentre* fits into this regional genre by virtue of its focus on Hong Kong's SARS experience,⁴ but its critical tone and independent perspectives significantly differ from the Singapore synthesis, reflecting the cities' different political systems and relationships with mainland China. The editor Christine Loh is the chief executive officer of the Civic Exchange in Hong Kong, an independent non-profit policy think tank established in 2000. The Civic Exchange takes as its mission to inform the public in Hong Kong about issues and events from the broadest possible perspective. This kind of independent civic organization committed to the right to know and concerns of the public does not exist in Singa-

pore, mainland China, or even Taiwan.⁵ Furthermore, it offers sobering, incisive, and critical political perspectives otherwise scarce in the region.

In addition to the Preface, editor Christine Loh either authored or co-authored six of the fourteen chapters. Loh's contributions include chapters that cover the following issues: the search for the coronavirus; the politics of SARS with respect to the WHO, Hong Kong, and mainland China; the old and new politics that SARS forced into view; the serious concerns over media transparency and SARS; the specific experience of the Hong Kong community with SARS; and finally an assessment of the lessons learned from being the world's epicenter of SARS in 2003. These form the core chapters on what made Hong Kong's SARS experience geographically, epidemiologically, socially, and, in particular, politically unique.

Several physicians involved in the epidemic also contributed first-hand accounts of what happened. Moira Chan-Yeung, professor of respiratory medicine at the University of Hong Kong, contributes what it was like to be "At the Front-line"; Edith MC Lao, Gabriel Leung, Anthony Hedley, and Tai-Hing Lam, from the faculty of the Department of Community and Family Medicine at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, collaborate on "The Public Health Viewpoint," a chapter replete with detailed epidemiological figures, telling statistics, and recommendations for macro-level transformations; from the same medical department, Stephen Ng evaluates the prevailing hypotheses for "The Mystery of Amoy Gardens" where there were 267 confirmed SARS cases by April 1, but still no consensus on the case of such widespread infection; finally, a consultant hematologist at the Prince of Wales Hospital, Gregory Cheng, even gives a unique account titled "Healing Myself: Diary of a SARS Patient and Doctor" of his own twenty-day experience as a SARS patient. For this book, these medical experts offers invaluable insights from both personal experience and professional training intended to better prepare Hong Kong for the next epidemic.

In addition to a "Calendar of Events" and narrative of the key moments and figures in "Unmasking SARS" during 2003, the remaining essays discuss the broader issues that SARS brought to the surface. These issues include the impact of SARS on Hong Kong's economy, the serious political fallout in the Tung administration, the unprecedented public dissent among Hong Kong's citizenry, the need for a center of disease control in Hong Kong (they have a Public Health Laboratory Centre), and perhaps most importantly, the need for an open flow of information and accurate up-to-date data in a modern, knowledge-based society inextricably connected to the world.

In contrast to the more political focus of *At the Epicentre* on the myriad implications of the SARS experience in Hong Kong, two other books out of Singapore, *SARS War: Combating the Disease* and *The New Global Threat: Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome And Its Impacts*, provide readers with the basic facts, chronology, assessments, and initial analyses from the field of SARS as early as the fall

of 2003.⁶ *The SARS War* offers what appears to be the first handbook for the lay-person complete with governmental and medical policies, preventive measures for individuals and organizations, frequently asked questions, website addresses for the departments of health, and phone numbers for local hospitals throughout the region including Hong Kong. *The New Global Threat* provides the first analyses on broader issues related to SARS by each of the regions affected: China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Toronto. The articles about SARS in mainland China, for example, share a common concern with lack of media transparency, government miscalculation, and political fallout. By contrast, the assessments of SARS in Singapore address more scientific, epidemiological, and policy-making issues. An article on Taiwan and another on Toronto summarize the chronology, epidemiology, and final control of SARS in each region. The articles on Hong Kong largely focus instead on broader consequences of the impact of SARS on the economy, society, media, and culture, and offer an initial assessment of the crisis in public confidence in the Tung government. All of the aforementioned themes are developed further in *At the Epicentre*. Published by World Scientific in Singapore, these two books together nevertheless provided the first regional syntheses and assessments in English of what had happened during the SARS epidemic from November 2002 to September 2003.

Some books are now examining the SARS experiences from a legal perspective, including implications for Hong Kong.⁷ Other books summarize the recent scientific and clinical research on SARS.⁸ More recently, we find journalistic accounts that examine the epidemic as a whole, but these tend to be more descriptive than analytical.⁹ The best analytic synthesis of the SARS epidemic would have to be *SARS in China: Prelude to Pandemic?*¹⁰ Although this synthesis is more focused on what happened in mainland China, two chapters “Psychological Responses to SARS in Hong Kong—Report from the Front Line” and “SARS and the Problem of Social Stigma” complement the chapters on the “Outbreak of Dissent” and “The Mystery of Amoy Gardens” in *At the Epicentre*.

At the Epicentre shares its greatest weakness, however, with all of these other sources on SARS in that none of them discuss the application of an integrated Western-Chinese Medicine—that is, traditional Chinese medical formulas in combination with biomedical therapies—approach to treat SARS patients. *SARS War: Combating the Disease*, for example, includes a section on the “Use of Herbal Medicines,” including four formulas for preventing SARS with Traditional Chinese Medicine (pp. 103–109), but does not mention that physicians in mainland China were using integrated medicine to treat their SARS patients. I would have liked to see an assessment of the clinical treatments SARS patients received in Hong Kong hospitals, especially any known iatrogenic effects from the therapies they received. Similarly, I think there should have been at least some discussion of the collaboration between Hong Kong and Guangdong physicians

who developed clinical and research protocols for the treatment and prevention of SARS using an integrated approach.

In a section about ongoing research in her essay "At the Frontline," Dr. Moira Chan-Yeung mentions that two specialists from the Chinese Medicine Hospital of Guangdong Province were invited to visit Hong Kong to discuss their use of traditional Chinese medicine in the treatment SARS and collaborate with Hong Kong traditional medicine practitioners. Instead of discussing the specific details of this exchange, however, she refers the reader to one of the Department of Health's SARS Bulletins (#30) for further research, and unfortunately this publication is just as vague on this collaboration (p. 29, fn. 26).¹¹ Those interested in the integrated approach many of the Chinese physicians in mainland China took to treat their SARS patients will have to read the WHO's publication that reviewed the clinical reports of the combination of traditional Chinese medicine and biomedicine, reports which were presented at international conferences on the subject in both Geneva and Beijing during November of 2003.¹²

Again, Chinese language publications on this subject are far more numerous than in English, especially in mainland China where the treatment and prevention of SARS with traditional Chinese medicine has become a matter of national pride and now central government patronage.¹³ One may also find sources on the topic in Hong Kong and Taiwan where research and conferences have been carried out on the subject.¹⁴ Despite this omission, *At the Epicentre* nevertheless places the reader, as its title promises, at the very epicenter of the first newly emergent infectious disease of the twenty-first century. As such, *At the Epicentre* provides a richly textured account of what happened locally in Hong Kong as well as a well-argued case for the kinds of political, institutional, and communication changes necessary to prevent the next potential epidemic from being as severe or as much of a shock to the current Hong Kong Special Administration Region system.

Marta Hanson

Marta Hanson is an assistant professor in the Department of the history of medicine, Johns Hopkins University, School of Medicine. She is also currently working on a new course in the history of public health in China.

NOTES

1. The following titles represent examples of the literally hundreds of publications from mainland China: Feng Huiling 馮惠玲, ed., *Gonggong weiji qishi lu dui SARS de duo wei shen shi* 公共危機啓示錄：對SARS的多維審視 (Record of enlightening remarks on public crisis: several remarkable and careful observations about SARS) (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2003); Liang Qingyin 梁慶寅, ed., *Feidian: Fansi yu duice* 非典：反思與對策 (SARS: Retrospection and countermeasures) (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 2003); Wei Jian 魏健, *Gaibian renlei shehui de ershi zhong wenyi* 改辨人類社會的二十種瘟疫 (The twenty epidemics that changed human society) (Beijing: Jingji ribao chubanshe, 2003); and Xie Xialing 謝遐齡, Yu Hai 于海, Fan Lizhu 潘麗珠, eds., *SARS, quanqiu hua yu zhongguo* 全球化與中國 (SARS, Globalization and China) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2004).

2. There appears, however, to be only one synthesis of SARS in Vietnam, but it is bilingual. See Thi Trung Chien Tran, *Hoat dong phong chong SARS tai Viet Nam* (SARS containment activities in Vietnam) (Ha Noi: National Government, 2003).

3. Chua Mui Hoong, Maria Almenoar, and Teh Joo Lin, eds., *A Defining Moment: How Singapore Beat SARS* (Singapore: The Institute of Policy Studies, 2004). Other books in this genre of governmental publications on SARS for Singapore include Chor Lin Lee and Bryan van der Beek's *>38°C: Remembering SARS* (Singapore: Singapore History Museum, 2004); *Fighting SARS Together* (Singapore: Ministry of Information, Communications, and the Arts, 2003); and W. C. Ng's *The Silent War: 1 March–31 May 2003* (Singapore: Tan Tock Seng Hospital, 2004).

4. For another non-governmental publication on the Hong Kong experience written from the perspective of voluntary welfare agencies, see Zhikang Zeng's *Uniting in Combating SARS* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Council of Social Service, 2003). Other local accounts include *Fighting SARS: We Care We Serve* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2003); and Marcus Oleniuk's *Living with it: Hong Kong Spring 2003* (Huo zai dang xia: Sianggang, 2003; Hong Kong: WordAsia, 2003). An important resource from the Hong Kong medical community is the *Report of the Hospital Authority Review Panel on the SARS Outbreak* (Hong Kong: Hospital Authority, 2003). The government summary in English is the *SARS in Hong Kong: from experience to action: a summary report of the SARS Expert Committee* (Hong Kong: Government Logistics Department, 2003). For a new history of medicine and public health in Hong Kong, see the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences Society, *Plague, SARS and the Story of Medicine in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006).

5. The following English publications on SARS in Taiwan were all published by the Executive Yuan, Department of Health, Center for Disease Control in Taipei: I. J. Su et al., *Memoir of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome control in Taiwan* (2003); I. J. Su et al., *SARS in Taiwan: One Year after the Break* (2004); and *SARS and Flu Prevention: Taiwan Experience* (2004).

6. Tommy Koh, Aileen Plant, and Eng Hin Lee, eds., *The New Global Threat: Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and Its Impacts* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd., 2003). Ping Chung Leung and Eng Eong Ooi, eds., *SARS War: Combating the Disease* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd., 2003).

7. Fei-ling Wang, guest ed. and trans., "SARS in China," special issues, *Chinese Law and Government* 36, nos. 4 and 6 (2003) and 37, no. 1 (2004); and Catherine Swee Kian Tay, *Infectious Diseases Law & SARS* (Singapore: Times Editions, 2003).

8. For syntheses of biomedical research, see Angela McLean, *SARS* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Ashley S. Griffen, *Progress in SARS Research* (New York: Nova Biomedical Books, 2005).

9. For journalistic accounts, see Thomas Abraham, *Twenty-First Century Plague: The Story of SARS* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); and Karl Taro Greenfeld, *China Syndrome: The True Story of the 21st Century's First Great Epidemic* (New York: Harper-Collins Publishers, 2006).

10. Arthur Kleinman and James Watson, eds., *SARS in China: Prelude to Pandemic?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

11. In the chapter "Healing Myself," Gregory Cheng mentions that many of his colleagues who also suffered from SARS had not fully recovered due to abnormalities in their chest X-rays and therefore "Out of frustration, many of them have turned to traditional Chinese medicine for additional treatment" (p. 39). He also did not specify what traditional formulas they were taking or evaluate their reasoning or perceived outcomes.

12. World Health Organization, *SARS: Clinical Trials on Treatment Using a Combination of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Medicine* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2004). There is another work in English, but it focuses more on traditional Chinese medicine for prevention rather than treatment of SARS; it is Doris Seow, *SARS: Better Understand and Prevention* (Singapore: Unlimited Graphics Pte., 2003). For an assessment of the randomized clinical trials (RCTs) on the integrated treatments for SARS, see Liu, Zhang, He, Li, and Kang, "Chinese herbs combined with Western medicine for severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)," *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* Vol. 2 (2006): 1–68.

13. A special issue on SARS in a traditional Chinese medicine journal, just to give one example, came out as early as June 2003: Zhu Mei 朱梅, "Guangzhou zhongyiyao daxue yifuyuan jizhen ke shou Feidian 37 li linchuang zongjie" 廣州中醫藥大學一附院急診科收非典37例臨床總結 (Clinical summary of treating 37 cases of SARS in the emergency room of the First Hospital affiliated with the Guangzhou University of Traditional Chinese Medicine), "Special Report on SARS," in *Tianjin zhongyiyao: Feidian zhuanti* 天津中醫藥：非典專題 (Tianjin Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine 20, no. 3 (June 2003): 15–16.

This theme was continued in several articles in the next issue: Zhang Boli 張伯禮 and Zhang Junping 張軍平, "Zhong xi yi jiehe zhiliao SARS ruogan wenti tantao" 中西醫結合治療SARS若干問題探討 (Discussion of some problems in SARS treated by integrated Chinese and western medicine), *Tianjin zhongyiyao* (Tianjin Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine) 20, no. 4 (August 2004): 8–11. The Chinese Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine located in Beijing also published in June of 2003 its own history of Chinese medicine treating epidemics and assessment of the specific role of traditional Chinese medicine in preventing and treating SARS by the following title: Zhongguo zhongyi yanjiuyuan 中國中醫藥研究院, *Zhongyiyao fangzhi Feidianxing feiyan (SARS) yanjiu* 中醫藥防治非典型肺炎(SARS)研究 (Research on the prevention and treatment of SARS with traditional Chinese medicine), 2 vols. (Beijing: Zhongyi guji chubanshe). These titles are only the tip of the iceberg of publications on this subject in mainland China.

14. For a synthesis of SARS and traditional Chinese medicine research in Taiwan, see Pi-Sung Huang 黃碧松, San-Leng Su 蘇三稜, et al., eds., 2004 *Nian Wenbing guoji xueshu yantaohui* 2004 年溫病國際學術研討會 (2004 International Academic Research of Wenbing) (Taipei: Cheng Sui-Tsung, 2004), pp. 553–568. For comparable research in Hong Kong, see Hong Kong Baptist University, School of Chinese Medicine, *Xianggang jinhui daxue Zhongyi xueyuan kang yanxing dong shilu* 香港浸會大學中醫學院抗炎行動實錄 (Hong Kong: Jinhui daxue zhongyiyao xueyuan mishu chu, 2003). This organization maintains the following website devoted to ways to treat SARS with Chinese medicine: <http://www.clnc.scm.hkbu.edu.hk/ap/chi/>.