

nal slant on Emerson and his friends, there is a diminished quality about the book's waning chapters, all the more poignant because they describe Emerson's waning powers. The book also contains some regrettable errors: "Come live with me, and be my love" is Christopher Marlowe's line, not John Donne's. And the opening chapters on Emerson's family seem flat and out of kilter with the rest. A more

active editorial hand, and a more ambitious epilogue, would have helped. Nonetheless, *Emerson Among the Eccentrics* will be an essential book. Its inspired reconfiguration of oft-quoted materials and anecdotes shows that friendship was the compost for the New England soil from which sprang Emerson's contribution to American life and letters.

—John F. Callahan

Contemporary Affairs

THE BAMBOO NETWORK: How Expatriate Chinese Entrepreneurs Are Creating a New Economic Superpower in Asia.

By Murray Weidenbaum and Samuel Hughes. Free Press. 264 pp. \$24

Numbering roughly 40 million, the ethnic Chinese of Asia who live outside China—in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia—produce some \$600 billion in goods and services. This would be a respectable gross national product for a nation with that population. But the overseas Chinese are not a nation; they are a diverse diaspora. So their future role, both within the region and internationally, is bound to be complex. These ethnic Chinese are at ease neither in their countries of residence nor in China. To survive, they have adapted and yielded—like the proverbial bamboo, which “bends but does not break.”

The authors of this study are specialists in business and economics: Weidenbaum (the first chairman of President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisors) is professor of economics and director of the Center for the Study of American Business at Washington University in St. Louis; Hughes is a research fellow at the center. So, not surprisingly, most of their attention is devoted to the overseas Chinese as economic actors. Histories of some of the great Chinese fortunes are presented in excellent profiles, from Li Kashing's Cheung Kong Group in Hong Kong to the Chia family's Charoen Pokphand in Thailand. The authors show how each group has acquired certain traits in response to the overseas environment: complex corporate structures that ensure secrecy and conceal assets, fam-

ily dominance and close informal bonds of trust with other Chinese, and careful adjustment to political realities. The last includes cooperation with powerful non-Chinese—notably in Indonesia, where members of the military regularly front for Chinese entrepreneurs.

Now that mainland China is emerging as a field of economic activity, one might expect the overseas Chinese to have an easier time of it there. But, ironically, their adaptive skills are also needed in their “homeland.” Most of the Asian states where they now live are far more advanced than China in constitutional government, rule of law, and sanctity of person (in China, extortions and kidnappings of overseas Chinese businessmen are not uncommon). In these respects, the environment of China is quite similar to that of the entrepreneurs' adopted countries 30 years ago.

Yet, by the same token, the experience of the overseas Chinese gives them an advantage over other would-be entrepreneurs now entering China. The overseas Chinese provide more than three-quarters of all foreign direct investment, not to mention skills, technologies, and access to financial and marketing networks. Some believe that the eventual result of these relationships will be the knitting together of an economic and cultural “Greater China” out of China proper plus Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The question is whether such economic integration can occur unhindered by the deep political divisions that cut through the Chinese world. After all, since the Qing dynasty, the overseas Chinese have introduced political trouble into Chinese regimes as often as they have introduced know-how and wealth. Weidenbaum and

Hughes touch on politics only in passing—and wisely so, because their book's real strength lies in the competence and lack of sensationalism of its economically focused approach. But to their credit, the authors acknowledge that the emergence of "Greater China"—like that of industrial Europe in the 19th century—may as plausibly be accompanied by conflict as by peace and prosperity.

—Arthur Waldron

TRUE STORIES OF THE KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN.

Edited by Keith Howard. Cassell. 192 pp. \$60 cloth, \$16.95 paper

"The shame of a woman [is] the shame of her whole family." Hence the long silence of the more than 200,000 Korean women forced into prostitution by the Japanese military between 1933 and 1945. Only recently has the passage of time softened the stigma and allowed a number of these former "comfort women" to step forward. This compilation of 19 of their stories was first published in 1993 by the Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. It appeared against the backdrop of increased international scrutiny of Japan's war crimes, and the Japanese government's blan-

ket apology to the women involved. The present volume, edited and introduced by Keith Howard (a Korean studies lecturer at the University of London), coincides with a recent UN recommendation of a full formal apology, reparations, and criminal prosecutions.

This can be a painful book to read. The stories follow a similar pattern, and soon their impact fades through sheer repetition. But a few details stand out. For example, Okpun Yi recalls looking out from the Taiwan school building where she was confined and seeing lines of Japanese soldiers that were so long, "the ends of the queues were sometimes invisible." Perhaps most compelling are the current lives of these 19 women. In a society that insists on marriage, all but five attempted some sort of union. Most ended in failure. Fifteen of the women now live alone under harsh conditions, and many suffer from recurring diseases. Some are involved in the campaign for reparation; others seem content with the emotional catharsis of finally sharing their terrible secret. Most would agree with the 65-year-old Turi Yun, who said simply, "They ruined my life. . . . I will not be able to forget what happened even after I die."

—Debbie Lim

Religion & Philosophy

MACHIAVELLI'S VIRTUE.

By Harvey C. Mansfield. Univ. of Chicago Press. 387 pp. \$29.95

"Machiavelli as the principal character in his own thought," the author begins boldly, "that is the theme of this collection of articles and essays." But this is no "postmodernist gloss or deconstruction." Far from it. To Mansfield, professor of government at Harvard University, there is only one true reading of the text. Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) himself wishes to be the prince: "He will be the mastermind behind the operation, mastering future generations through his mind." So much for the urbane, skeptical,

humanistic but realistic, republican Machiavelli read by most scholars. The true Machiavelli was—how shall one paraphrase?—a kind of superknowledgeable proto-political scientist, contemptuous of the ineptitude of princes, jealous of their power, and certain that he could do better.

So a close reading of Machiavelli leaves no doubt of his ambition, or that he was (as many of his first readers thought) an unashamed teacher of evil, of no-holds-barred ruthlessness in the pursuit of any power, not just in the defense of a republic (as a superficial reading of the *Discourses* has suggested to others). But Mansfield goes

