accounts of their specialisms, but students or more general readers are advised to turn, at least to begin with, to the more general essays, which are of high quality: to the chapter by the editors on the Roman empire, for instance, to Paul Magdalino on Byzantium, or to the chapters on the Renaissance, the Arab world, and China mentioned above.

Another strategy might be to scan the chapters in search of different ways of ordering knowledge. Alphabetical order (despite no fewer than thirty-two references in the index) was not yet preponderant in the period covered by this volume. Vincent of Beauvais, for instance, organized his *Mirror of Nature* by the six days of creation, while Alsted, at the end of the period, ordered his encyclopaedia according to academic disciplines. However, as the editors warn us at the start, some of the ordering principles in ancient compilations were implicit, and they have become difficult to reconstruct. A second recurrent theme in this volume is that of power, of the compilation of knowledge as 'made possible by empire', as the editors suggest, or an 'extension of imperial power', as Jill Harries remarks in the case of Justinian's encyclopaedia of law, or the work of imperial bureaucrats, as in the case of the fourteenth-century Syrian al-Umari or that of the scholars in the service of the Chinese emperor Qianlong. Indeed, König and Woolf go as far as to suggest that 'encyclopaedism may have a special affinity with autocracy' (though the French *Encyclopédie* offers an impressive counter-example). A third recurrent theme in the volume is that of 'information overload', as Ann Blair calls it. The editors, for instance, present Roman encyclopaedism 'as a response to anxiety about information overload'. Later in the volume we learn that, in the Islamic world in the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldun was complaining that 'the great number of works available' was 'among the things that are harmful to the human quest for knowledge'. On the other hand, the editors also offer the opposite argument, to the effect that the 'fear of losing knowledge' underlay some enterprises of compilation (that of Isidore of Seville springs to mind). Was there never a point of equilibrium between too little and too much?

If readers who hoped that the volume would provide a general picture of fifteen hundred years of encyclopaedism may well be disappointed, it does contain both new ideas and new material for such a survey. All that is required is to summarize, to make excerpts, and to synthesize, just as traditional encyclopaedists used to do.

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The History of the Book in East Asia. Edited by CYNTHIA BROKAW and PETER KORNICKI. (The History of the Book in the East.) Pp. xxxvi, 604. Farnham, Ashgate. 2013. £170.00. ISBN: 9781409437819

In this book, Cynthia Brokaw and Peter Kornicki define book history in East Asia as a cluster of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese traditions that shared certain linguistic and technological foundations until the nineteenth century. China was the source and repository of learning and culture for Korean and Japanese elites, who were expected to master Chinese texts and the classical Chinese language in their administrative and intellectual practices, in spite of the invention of Korean and Japanese scripts and their different spoken languages. Both Korea and Japan imported Chinese books and reproduced Chinese texts. China introduced the technology of woodblock printing to her neighbours. This remained the most commonly used method of printing in most of East Asia from its invention in the eighth century or earlier through the early twentieth century, even though printing from movable type was known and used for some imprints. These linguistic and technological foundations distinguish East Asian print cultures from those of Europe and North America, which are characterized by their trilingual Greek, Latin, and Hebrew origins and by letterpress printing (pp. xiii–xxxv).

In addition to the technological details of Chinese xylography (Joseph McDermott), some other general features of the Chinese, Korean, and Japanese traditions are touched upon in the essays reprinted in this volume. Unsurprisingly, the Chinese tradition is considered representative and is presented most fully. From the tenth century through the later imperial period

(1368–1911), both the Chinese state and literati were involved in printing and publishing. The bureaucratic and elite networks interacted in the production and dissemination of information (Hilde De Weerdt). Meanwhile, commercial publishing increased despite the Mongol conquest in the 1270s and the temporary abolishment of the civil service examinations until 1314 (Lucille Chia). By the publishing boom of the late sixteenth century, commercial printing in China had produced a reading public extending from literati down to the lower classes (Anne E. McLaren). It also contributed to the formation of an intellectual climate that challenged the Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian orthodoxy in the civil service examinations (Kai-wing Chow). Commercial publishers adjusted their strategies to appeal to their targeted readers (Ellen Widmer). The technology of woodblock printing determined the economic and social organization of Chinese publishing firms. Their family nature — the link to the family and descent group organizations in both structure and operation — shaped and encouraged their commercial success (Brokaw).

Two further topics related to the Chinese tradition are exciting and deserve further explorations. In her discussion of illustrated manuscripts in the Song dynasty (960–1279), Maggie Bickford notices the textual and graphic components of the ancient Chinese book. In both theories and practices, the Chinese bibliographic norm considered both textual and graphic materials as books. '*Tushu*', the Classical Chinese counterpart of the book, is a compound of *tu* (graph, diagram, or picture) and *shu* (script or text). How this concept shaped book production and storage and reading experiences in ancient China, and when and how the graphic and textual components physically and bibliographically separated from each other, are questions worth asking for historians of the Chinese book. The other stimulating question comes from Anne Burkus-Chasson, who discusses how the Chinese codex in the thread-stitched binding, with its recto and verso sides, affected the reading experience. Interruptions and some unexpected elements, she writes, would appear in turning the leaf of the illustrated book, but could not be experienced in reading books in scroll and other forms. The thread-stitched binding was the last and dominant style in traditional Chinese books. Yet binding is not the only expressive form and forging facture in the reading experience: genre, text, layout, and the particular circumstance of reading also play roles in the encounter between the world of the text and the world of the reader as well as in the production of meaning.

Before commercial publishing came to flourish in the seventeenth century, Japanese print culture had been dominated by Buddhist monasteries, and most imprints were Buddhist texts (K. B. Gardner). From the seventeenth century onwards, the Japanese publishing industry had no obvious centre of its book trade, with publishers operating in castle towns all over the country. Publishers also enjoyed a relative freedom from legal restraints and the need for major capital investment (Peter Kornicki). Commercial publishing shaped early modern Japanese literature, characterized by illustrations printed from woodblocks (Ekkehard May). It was developed in the Meiji period (1868–1912) as the means to obtain material and intellectual power from the West and disseminate it among the growing reading public. It contributed to the political integration and the establishment of elite and popular education in Meiji Japan (Giles Richter).

Japanese book culture has two distinctive features, highlighted in this volume. One is its importation of Chinese and Dutch books in the Edo period (1603–1868), which contributed to the reformation of the Japanese intellectual world (W. J. Boot). The other is the role of commercial lending libraries in circulating books (Andrew Markus), institutions that also appeared in eighteenth-century Korea (Michael Kim) but were not recorded in China until the turn of the twentieth century.

Manuscripts coexisted with printed books even when printing was widespread in East Asia, as in Europe (Bickford and Kornicki). This volume covers both manuscripts and printed books, but puts more weight on printed books (especially commercial imprints), and examines the scribal tradition in the context of print tradition rather than over the longer tradition of book culture. China's scribal culture is much older than her print culture, and before the invention of printing it had produced many books on bamboo strips, silk, and other materials in various

physical forms, some of which were carried on into the print age. Besides commercial publishers, Chinese central and local governments and literati were active players in printing and publishing. The selected essays cover the period from approximately 1000 to the 1800s only. Such an emphasis in this volume more or less resonates with Robert Darnton's model of 'communication circuit', which prefers print culture over scribal culture.

The volume includes only two articles about Korean print culture, both about the reception of printed texts (Martina Deuchler and Michael Kim). Moreover, topics other than printing and publishing, such as authorship, reading methods, censorship and literary acquisition, knowledge transmission and preservation, education, and economics, are not covered at all. If we consider the only article on Sino-Japanese book trade (W. J. Boot) as a transnational study of book culture in East Asia, we should expect more explorations of textual transmission, book circulation, intellectual exchanges through reading, cultures of knowledge, and geography of knowledge between East Asian cultures. These studies, among others, will help us effectively to integrate East Asian book cultures into a unit distinctive from other traditions.

Brokaw and Kornicki clearly present in their volume some general features of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese book cultures which, put together, roughly outline the historical landscape of the printed book in East Asia. Their book is the first step towards a transnational history of the book in East Asia and a comparative history advocated but not seriously undertaken. Its reprinted inclusions are worth reading for historians of the book in East Asia and students interested in transnational and comparative studies.

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The History of the Book in South Asia. Edited by FRANCESCA ORSINI. (The History of the Book in the East.) Farnham: Ashgate. 2013. Pp. 620. £170.00. ISBN: 9781409437840

According to the publisher's website, the main goals for the series in which this hefty and very pricy volume appeared are twofold. First, it is meant to counterbalance and correct 'the Eurocentrism of the history of the book as practised in the West'. Second, it aims to do this by providing access to 'leading articles in the field from disparate journals which are often difficult to locate and of limited access'.

For readers interested in diversifying the geographic and temporal scope of the history of book production and reading, this volume offers a good selection of relevant reading materials and a short and handy introduction by the editor (pp. xi–xxiv). *The History of the Book in South Asia* covers roughly two thousand years (from the beginning of the dynamics between oral and written traditions through the present) and contributions range across the South Asian continent including many languages and scripts. Given the size of the volume, and because most of the contributions are chapters from books that have already been reviewed elsewhere, I will focus on a question relevant to the goals set out for the series of which it is part: what may a reader hoping to avoid 'the Eurocentrism of the history of the book' pick up from the eighteen chapters?

Sheldon Pollock's chapter 'Literary Culture and Manuscript Culture in Precolonial India' encapsulates much of what can be gained from a comparison between Western and South Asian histories of book production. Pollock highlights the ways in which a focus on the rise of print in Western scholarship would lead to a distortion of the Indian history of writing and the dissemination of texts. Even though print technology may have been known in South Asia as early as the ninth century and was used by the sixteenth, it played an insignificant role there until the late nineteenth century. Print proved to be a less appealing technology in a world in which 'script mercantilism' had already been established for centuries. Manuscripts were produced and reproduced on a massive scale (over 30 million extant texts represent but a small fraction of what once existed) and manuscript transmission had proven cheaper and more flexible by the time the rulers of regional kingdoms patronized textual production in multiple