true up to 2008, and that we all know the revolution that has taken place in publishing in the past six or seven years.

It is not a pretty book, and that is a pity. The perfect binding is a fragile form for this weight of paper and this number of big pages. The binding is glossy green paper on boards, striped on the front cover, with the title, subtitle, and author’s name awkwardly alternating line by line. My copy reached me already badly dented at the corners. This is not a binding that will stand up to much use. There are fourteen interesting illustrations. Sadly, their reproduction quality is very poor. They may not be photocopies, but that is what they look like, dark, shadowy, and printed on the same paper as the text. That is to be regretted, because they are all important examples. Someone who has not seen the book might be forgiven for imagining that, despite its scholarly significance, it has been produced cheaply perhaps in order to be sure of library sales. Not so. It costs a staggering one hundred and fifty dollars. One is left wondering how much more per copy it would have cost to fit it out in a decent, sturdy binding, one that would last as long as the scholarship it holds: ten dollars, twenty dollars? If libraries have to send it out for rebinding in two or three years’ time they might well have been willing to pay right at the start for a good, cloth, publisher’s binding, even if an optional extra.

Perhaps a somewhat inferior physical object is the price authors and users have to pay these days for a hard-copy bibliography. That is a shame, because this is an important piece of scholarship that deserves better presentation. It is a monumental work in every sense.

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Conventionally, scholarship of modern Chinese literature has described the May Fourth Movement of 1919 as suddenly creating a very sharp break between the classical literary language and tradition, and the new, vernacular-based modernism that provides the foundation for Chinese writing to the present day. In the past two decades, however, scholarship in Chinese studies, especially in North America, has sought to recover the transitonally modernist
contributions of the late Qing dynasty (i.e., the several decades leading up to the dynasty’s fall in 1911). Michael Gibbs Hill’s *Lin Shu, Inc: Translation and the Making of Modern Chinese Culture* can be seen in this light; it extends the re-evaluation of the late Qing to the work of China’s foremost translator of the early twentieth century, Lin Shu. Lin Shu (1852–1924) has long been acknowledged as a crucial figure in mediating China’s exposure to foreign literature and thought during this period, but has nevertheless remained peripheral to most literary studies. Partially, this neglect may have been due to anxieties over “what to do” with translation when one approaches it from literary-historical rather than theoretical perspectives: does the rush of newly available Western and Japanese works during the period, hugely influential on modern Chinese thought, not simply show the importance of a newly global context, rather than of a particular translator’s agency? This neglect has certainly also derived from the scornful judgment of Lin Shu’s younger contemporaries of the May Fourth period, a judgement that has lasted to the present. Lin’s Chinese prose style, related to that of the so-called “Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies School,” is a florid and falsely archaizing one, and his oeuvre would seem at first to be as odd a candidate for a modernizing force as would the most stilted Victorian prose when flanked by Joyce and Woolf. When one considers that Lin had little actual linguistic skill in the languages from which he translated (relying instead on interpreters), it is no surprise that he has often been considered something of a best-selling hack.

Hill’s great contribution is to make a case for the relevance of Lin that does not rely on a revisionist account of his literary contributions. At its best, *Lin Shu, Inc.* is of great relevance to scholars of book history: as the monograph’s title suggests, Hill is not trying to write a traditional literary biography, but rather to treat Lin as a particularly commercialized version of the Foucaultian author-function. Lin Shu is less of a romantic intellectual and more of an entrepreneurial organizer of a “factory of writing,” as well as the brand under which that factory’s products are sold to a newly emergent modern readership. It takes nothing away from Hill’s scholarship to note, however, that only a relatively small portion of the book, Hill’s sixth and seventh chapters, actually fulfills the promise of his title in a way that will be of primary interest to scholars of book history. The core of the book, chapters three through five, focuses on close readings of a few of Lin’s translations: *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Aesop’s *Fables*, *Oliver Twist*, and Washington Irving’s *The Sketch Book*. Apart from a few minor
issues with Hill’s translations (which distract from but do not subvert his argument), these chapters are valuable in their own right as case studies in translation practice during China’s modernization. Given Lin’s vast output (over 150 volumes were published under his name), Hill does not try to produce a definitive judgment on the nature of Lin’s translation practice, but his analysis in these core chapters does make a fascinating case for how the act of translation shaped and was shaped by China’s deep-seated concerns over national, racial, and class-based conflict, as well as the role of intellectual reform as a possible means of national salvation. However, as those chapters are of greater interest to a translation studies audience, I would like to address more directly the primary arguments of the sixth chapter. (The seventh, also of relevance to book history, is perhaps less accessible to non-specialists.)

This chapter, in which Hill discusses what he calls Lin’s projects of “national classicism,” is perhaps the most surprising and innovative portion of the monograph. Here, Hill leaves behind the translation projects for which Lin has always been best known, and discusses instead his work editing and collating national textbooks of classical Chinese for the Commercial Press (probably the best-capitalized press of the high modern period), as well as his involvement as a writer and teacher for the first correspondence school course in classical literature, and his original classical scholarship. Lin was given charge of these projects on the strength of his general fame in the marketplace, but also because he was one of the foremost modern “conservative” stylists. The same adherence to Tongcheng-school classicism, which won him opprobrium from canonical modernists, also qualified him to define the classical tradition for the newly nationalizing modern education system. While it is not Hill’s purpose to discuss these efforts in the context of other period educational reform movements, the contrast is striking: almost always (among both canonical modernist writers and contemporary scholarship) educational reform is linked with promotion of the vernacular. It is important to note Hill’s chapter as a correction to such narratives: the persistence of classical education in the modern period is not simply the result of cultural cantankerousness, but is repackaged and marketed as an affirmative need for the modern student, who continues to need a connection to the national historical consciousness. This corrective raises interesting questions about the Chinese modernization project: vernacular reform advocates typically compared their own standpoint to European nations’ rejection of Latin – and as Hill makes clear, Lin Shu argued
for the continuing relevance of tradition in the same terms, just as Latin continued to be taught in the West. However, one wonders if perhaps more complex models of language standardization through modern textbook systems are needed? For in fact, both China and Western nations have generally arrived at education systems that teach prior ages of the national literature as a quasi-foreign language in special need of institutionalized support, precisely because such literary histories constitute the national non-vernacular.

These questions ultimately reach beyond Hill’s proper scope, in what is a focused and solid work of scholarship. Although only portions of the book are directly relevant to book history, those who have particular interest in the intersection of book history with translation studies will certainly find it a valuable work.

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The “rise and fall” in its title indicates that this book offers a chronicle of the printers’ international specimen exchange. Matthew McLennan Young explains that this exchange was organized in England, through the *Paper and Printing Trades Journal*, to collect and distribute specimens among printers who subscribed to the exchange. The primary goal of the exchange was to improve the standards of jobbing printing, especially in England, where the art of printing was seen to be in decline. The foundation of such an enterprise may have been spurred on by the first international meeting of printers in Paris in 1878, but it essentially formalized an editorial practice that commented on specimens submitted without reproducing them for readers to view, and one that put printers in contact with each other for the direct exchange of specimens. The exchange initially required both letterpress and lithographic printers to submit two hundred copies of their specimens in 11 x 8” size. It attracted far more international printers than anticipated; from almost thirty countries, 4,600 specimens – some created specifically for this exchange – were collated in sixteen volumes from 1880 to 1898.