the meeting of elite and popular cultures, the development of consumer culture, the relationship between official and educated Russia, the dilemmas of the intelligentsia's civilizing mission, and the social challenges presented by industrialization and urbanization. It opens a window onto the vivid urban popular culture of the day. Although Swift explicitly restricts his scope to Moscow and St. Petersburg, it would have been interesting to examine the impact of this movement beyond the capitals. One would also like to know more about the factory theatres that seem to have been so successful. Swift could have developed further his interesting argument about popular theatres as democratic spaces. At times, also, the organization of the narrative seems choppy or confusing. For example, Swift describes the results of audience surveys before telling the reader how these surveys were carried out. Despite these quibbles, he has produced a stimulating study of the world of popular theatre and the political debates it animated. It can be read profitably alongside Gary Thurston's *The Popular Theatre Movement in Russia*, which places more emphasis on the repertoire of these people's theatres.

Heather J. Coleman
University of Calgary

Michael Szonyi — *Practicing Kinship: Lineage and Descent in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002. Pp. xii, 313.

This study of common-descent group organization on an island in the Min River, near Fuzhou city on the South China coast, over the Ming and Qing periods (1368–1911) is, simply put, one of the most impressive works of Chinese history I have read in several years. It is brilliantly researched, most importantly in the published and unpublished written genealogies of the descent groups themselves, but supplemented with careful fieldwork: reading of local stone inscriptions, oral interviews, and observation of sites and recently revived ritual performances. The book is steeped in currently fashionable cultural theory and uses its language routinely, but never to the distraction of its narrative. Most impressively of all, Michael Szonyi's work displays an analytical rigour and a precision of argumentation that makes it a model of historical scholarship.

Formation of locally rooted kinship groups based on patrilineal descent — known in English as "lineages" or (less favoured nowadays) "clans" — was the single most pervasive tool of social organization in late imperial China, and its steady increase in popularity and importance was probably the most basic trend distinguishing the social history of this era. It was ideologically unassailable and, as Timothy Brook and Kai-wing Chow have shown, conveyed upon lineage members a mantle of neo-Confucian moral correctness and cultural superiority. Yet, in practice, the purpose of lineage organization was pragmatic and situational; the burden of a growing amount of recent research to which this book contributes is to show the surprising and remarkable range of utilities to which kinship-group formation might be put. As Szonyi very effectively demonstrates, however, this instrumentalism by no means

suggests lineage leaders' cavalier disregard of the orthodox texts that provided their formal models (most importantly Zhu Xi's twelfth-century *Family Rituals*). Representation of real world activities as in accord with the dictates of scripture was itself a basic strategy of the "practice" of kinship, and Szonyi shows the strenuous efforts devoted to this pursuit.

Szonyi's basic argument is that kinship is "practice", in the sense of that word offered by Pierre Bourdieu. That is, it is not a function of biological essentialism but rather of a highly complex, historically specific process of negotiation and contest. This is a valid argument, but in the context of other recent scholarship it is not surprising or dramatically original. What is original and very important here is the author's demonstration of just how this negotiation played out in one Chinese locality.

Probably the most controversial of Szonyi's arguments appears in chapter 2, regarding certain specific processes of negotiating the issue of lineage origins. In this chapter, far more boldly than most historians, Szonyi holds up his basic written sources — lineage genealogies — to the test of other oral and contextual evidence and opts to read them systematically against their literal message, to present them as deliberate misrepresentations of the historical past designed to advance (false) claims of venerability and ethnic purity. Like most Western scholars these days, Szonyi subscribes to a view of the settlement of south China that rejects the Han-nationalist myth of simple conquest and displacement of indigenous populations by a dominant, unitary "Chinese" population moving south from the north China plain. He follows instead the classic work of Wolfram Eberhard, which stressed the capacity of southern indigenes to "sinify", but in the process to remake "sinic" culture in new and more cosmopolitan ways. More specifically, Szonyi follows the work on the Dan people (a landless, boat-dwelling population in recent centuries systematically ostracized by their landed neighbours) of Helen Siu, who shows how "Han" versus "Dan" identity was a process of continuing historical flux. In keeping with his general theme (and echoing Leong Sow-Theng's powerful studies of "Hakka" identity), Szonyi presents the category of Dan itself as a tradition invented after the fact, rather than an historical given.

For many groups in the Fuzhou region, Szonyi argues, the compilation of a written genealogy was a means of claiming an essentialized Han pedigree — that is, an origin in the earliest wave of southern migration of northern "Chinese" — on the part of persons who had in fact only recently succeeded in appropriating for themselves Han status. Close reading of these texts, Szonyi suggests, exposes this strategic intent. I found his argument on this score vulnerable on a couple of key points.

First, following the work of Arthur Wolf and Chieh-shan Huang, Szonyi sees the pervasiveness of male adoption and uxorilocal marriage as a distinctive regional characteristic of coastal Fujian, and he argues the importance of this for upwardly mobile "Dan" males in founding new, safely "Han", kinship lines. Yet his assumption that, when a genealogy admits that the founding ancestor relocated to a new area and married a local woman, this admission necessarily implies a change of surname and appropriation of Han status (p. 36) seems rather cavalier when not backed up by other evidence. Secondly, Szonyi notes the local tradition that the defeated forces of Chen Youliang, a late Yuan rebel leader who lost to Zhu Yuanzhang in the

contest for dynastic founding, moved south and continued to practise the riverine lifestyles they had pursued prior to rebelling. For Szonyi, this means that they became "Dan". By extension, when an oral tradition within a lineage locally accepted as "Han" concedes that the founding ancestor was a follower of Chen Youliang, he takes this as an unintended admission that the lineage, despite genealogical claims to the contrary, comprised former Dan peoples who had promoted themselves into the dominant cultural group (pp. 45–50). In my view, this seems an overly hasty conclusion, particularly when Szonyi himself elsewhere reports (p. 59) that the prevailing narrative of Dan origins assigns this not to Chen Youliang's arrival in the fourteenth century, but rather to a much earlier seventh-century migration. The author might well be able to adduce further evidence and dispel my doubts on these scores, but I require a bit more convincing.

Subsequent chapters of the book are somewhat less ingenious and controversial, perhaps, but no less analytically sharp. Following the work of David Faure and (uncited) of Michael Palmer, Szonyi acknowledges the potential utility of the lineage as a vehicle of capital accumulation and investment, but he is properly keen to demonstrate that its practical functions were much more multifarious. He shows, among other things, that the institution of the *lijia* (fiscal canton) system by the Ming founder had the unintended consequence of cementing lineage solidarity as an instrument of tax accountability. He demonstrates that the building of a grandiose ancestral hall (*citing*) in the early Ming dynasty, a phenomenon restricted to local winners in the civil service examination sweepstakes, was transformed by the commercial revolution of the late Ming and early Qing dynasties into a much more ubiquitous emblem of (even relatively modest) financial prosperity. In the face of the troubling social mobility of this era, lineage organization evolved from an exclusive prerogative of the elite into a mechanism of social discipline that deliberately strove to be as inclusive of the general population as possible.

For the historian of China, one of the most basic contributions of this book is to flesh out, in very precise ways, our understanding of the tremendous socio-cultural consequences of the political changes of the fourteenth century, as well as the economic changes from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century. For the social historian more generally, it is a masterful case study of the complex interplay of ideology, state regulation, and actual social practice on the ground.

William T. Rowe
Johns Hopkins University

Louis-Georges Tin (dir.) — *Dictionnaire de l'homophobie*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 2003, xxvii, 451 p.

Le titre de l'ouvrage, *Dictionnaire de l'homophobie*, révèle l'approche privilégiée par les auteurs. Ces derniers insistent sur les aspects négatifs de l'histoire des gais et des lesbiennes, puisqu'ils étaient préoccupés par les causes de l'homophobie, et ce, dans des contextes, endroits et formes particuliers. Cet ouvrage fait partie d'un