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Abstract

The Eastern Slope Chronicle is a novel about migration, focusing on Dao Zhuang, a male Chinese migrant who seems unable to belong anywhere. It is also about the protagonist's self-discovery and discovery of his home and host countries. This paper examines the impact of migration on gender norms and how tensions between different gender norms, particularly models for masculinity, play out in the novel. While previous criticism has addressed The Eastern Slope Chronicle from the perspective of cultural, ethnic, or national identity,¹ issues surrounding the impact of migration on gender identity remain virtually unexplored.

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No-Man's Land: Migration, Masculinity, and Ouyang Yu's *The Eastern Slope Chronicle*

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I had had great hopes in Australia. Like many who came before or around the time when I came, I regarded Australia as a land of opportunity. However, that opportunity seemed to exist for Australians and people from other countries of the British Commonwealth and not the likes of me. Even though I had sworn my allegiance, Australians saw in me an un-Australian.
—Ouyang Yu (2002)

The Eastern Slope Chronicle is a novel about migration, focusing on Dao Zhuang, a male Chinese migrant who seems unable to belong anywhere. It is also about the protagonist's self-discovery and discovery of his home and host countries. This paper examines the impact of migration on gender norms and how tensions between different gender norms, particularly models for masculinity, play out in the novel. While previous criticism has addressed *The Eastern Slope Chronicle* from the perspective of cultural, ethnic, or national identity,¹ issues surrounding the impact of migration on gender identity remain virtually unexplored.

The Eastern Slope Chronicle is a semi-autobiographical narrative in that author Ouyang Yu and his character Dao Zhuang have similar trajectories. Ouyang is one of the numerous migrants from mainland China who have arrived in Australia since the mid-1980s. He arrived in 1991 to undertake a PhD on the representation of Chinese in Australian fiction at Melbourne's La Trobe University. A prolific writer in both Chinese and English, he is best known for his poetry collections *Moon Over Melbourne* and *Songs of the Last Chinese Poet*. *The Eastern Slope Chronicle*, his first novel, traces a life similar but not identical to his own, teasing the reader by offering not one but three alter egos for the author: Dao Zhuang; Wu Liao, a character in a novel written by Dao; and Wang Fu Fei, or Warne, Dao's friend, who is also a writer. With the Tiananmen Square events of 1989 as the historical backdrop, *The Eastern Slope Chronicle* focuses on Dao's multiple migrations between a fast-changing China and a

multicultural Australia. Coming from “a family of scholars” (Ouyang, *Eastern Slope* 105), Dao completed a Bachelor’s degree in English and a graduation certificate from a “Postgraduate Class” in China, and taught English at Red Cliff University before traveling to Australia to pursue postgraduate studies. He has a master’s degree in Chinese from an Australian university, and is a PhD candidate in Cross-Cultural Studies. Dao’s educational credentials establish him as what Kam Louie identifies as a *wen* man or a *zhishi fenxi* (intellectual) in the Chinese cultural discourse. In *Theorising Chinese Masculinity: Society and Gender in China*, Louie presents Chinese masculinity as a *wen-wu* dyad (roughly equivalent to *brain-brawn*). According to Louie, *wen* refers to “those genteel, refined qualities that were associated with literary and artistic pursuits of the classical scholars,” and *wu* generally means “physical strength and military prowess” (14). To make the *wen-wu* dichotomy better understood by Western readers, he renders it as “cultural attainment—martial valour” (4). An ideal man is expected to possess either *wen* or *wu*, and a scholar is regarded as no less masculine than a soldier. A man who has both superb *wen* and superb *wu* qualities is believed to stand above other men who have only one of the two attributes. Such a man is likely to become a supreme leader. *Wen* is given precedence over *wu*, even though both are indispensable components of Chinese masculinity. Education in its *wen* sense is equated with power, so a well-educated man of *wen* feels that he is entitled to “a leadership role in the moral and social dimensions as well” (5).

Chinese *wen* men or intellectuals in modern times are modeled on the Confucian scholars in imperial times. In imperial China, because the ruling class chose its bureaucrats from Confucian scholars, scholars were ranked above peasants, craftsmen, and businessmen. In the long sweep of Chinese history, *wen* masculinity, which values educational credentials and cultural attainments, has occupied a dominant position (Louie, *Theorising* 17–21). During the Cultural Revolution, however, intellectuals were persecuted and relegated to the “stinking old ninth” (*chou laojiu*) category among “class enemies” (White 254). After the havoc of the Cultural Revolution came fully to an end in 1976, intellectuals were again elevated to satisfy the needs of China’s modernization. After beginning economic reforms in 1978, the Party-state defined intellectuals as an “internal part of the working class,” and many were recruited into the bureaucracy and Party leadership (Li and Bachman; Gu and Goldman 6). However, the transformation of the Chinese economy, echoing globalization and neoliberalism in the world economy, brought about a change in social and cultural structures. Elite masculinity started to be disconnected from *wen* achievements and to be linked with material success. Intellectuals, particularly those who were not directly involved in economic activities and those who were outside the bureaucracy, were marginalized. This created a crisis of masculinity among these intellectuals, manifested as anxiety, bewilderment, and a sense of loss

and alienation. At the same time, the opening-up and reform initiative introduced Western notions of gender, including feminism, into the Chinese patriarchal ideology, pushing Chinese *wen* men further to the margins. In the novel, Dao complains bitterly about his wife's professional status and its impact on his domestic life:

Because she had gained a Master's Degree from a better university, Wuhan University, and had a better salary than mine, she had all the reason to bully me into doing things traditionally a woman's job, such as going to the market, cooking, cleaning the house, even folding the blankets in the mornings. (11)

It is against this backdrop of his *wen* masculinity undermined by Westernization, feminism, and capitalism in post-1978 China that Dao arrives in Australia to further his academic studies. Dao sees Australia as a country of freedom in both political and sexual terms. More importantly, he views it as a country where he will be able to reenter the center of power denied him in his home country. However, his life in Australia turns out to be nothing like what he has imagined, and he goes on to vent his frustration about being rejected by Australian society. Dao believes that it is his race that blocks his entry into the Australian mainstream and its centers of power, though gender plays an important part in his predicament as well, as plausibly explained by R. W. Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity. Connell investigates the hierarchical relationships between different masculinities and develops the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" from Antonio Gramsci's concept of "hegemony." Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as the "configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, *Masculinities* 77). Connell argues that "hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to women and to subordinated masculinities" (Connell, *Gender & Power* 186). Connell classifies non-hegemonic masculinities as either subordinate, complicit, or marginalized masculinities. Homosexual men, or men who have feminine traits, are subordinated because they are associated with women and so do not measure up to the patriarchal, heterosexual model. Working-class men, men of color, and immigrant men are marginalized because they are excluded from positions of power or dominance. The majority of men who do not fully measure up to the hegemonic model but who still gain the "patriarchal dividend" have complicit masculinity in the sense that they support the hegemonic system because they derive some degree of power from it (over women, homosexual men, etc.). Connell argues that while hegemonic, subordinate, and complicit masculinities only concern gender order, marginalized masculinity involves the interaction between gender, class, and race. Connell's

theory supports Dao's contention that he is marginalized because of his skin color and immigrant status, which are the reasons for his lack of both economic success and success with women. However, it only provides a partial explanation: like so many other of his countrymen, Dao's disadvantage is compounded by his lack of English proficiency and the lack of recognition for his educational qualifications. His cultural background and immigrant status relegate him to a lower position in the class system than the one he occupied in his home country.

According to Dao's observation, a "real" man in Australia is not only white but also athletic. While he reads and writes, "they play cricket and football, ski, go to the beach, surf and swim, rock-climb, and do all sorts of recreational activities, none of which I do" (Ouyang, *Eastern Slope* 205). Dao's understanding of dominant Australian masculinity tallies with the construction of the Australian male icon propagated by the Australian media. The legend of the ideal Australian male is created around a series of myths, which can be traced back to the image of the white bushman of the colonial period. In "Colonial Manhood and Masculinities," Clive Moore argues that the colonial Australian masculinity embodied by the white bushman was "violent, racist and sexist" (43). This larrikin white-bushman icon was later replaced by the courageous and self-sacrificing ANZAC soldier who gave way in turn to lifesavers (see Saunders) and contemporary sporting heroes (see Tranter and Donoghue).

Dao, who has pinned all his hopes on Australia to heal his wounded masculinity, realizes that against the Australian male icon, he stands no chance. However, rather than giving up, he goes to great lengths to rescue his troubled masculinity and escape from the margins. To achieve his goals, he adopts one of the gender strategies identified by Anthony S. Chen in his 1999 article "Lives at the Center of the Periphery, Lives at the Periphery of the Center: Chinese American Masculinities and Bargaining with Hegemony." Chen advances the concept of the "hegemonic bargain," which he defines as the exchange of social advantage for the elevation of manhood: "when a Chinese American man is located at the dominant end of at least one social hierarchy—whether it be race, class, sexuality, or generational status—he is in a position to strike a hegemonic bargain" (600).

Of Chen's four strategies aimed at undermining negative stereotypes (compensation, deflection, denial, and repudiation), Dao chooses deflection—exchanging his educational achievements and resultant social status for the elevation of his manhood. The first step is building up his academic credentials. Obtaining educational qualifications paves the way to a profession from which he expects to gain social status, the key to striking the hegemonic bargain. However, Dao's education does not lead to a high-status job. The jobs he does find, such as selling *Encyclopedia Britannica* from door to door, do not enable him to strike the hegemonic bargain.

He obtains some work compatible with his qualifications, “doing a research job for a Melbourne-based market research company on the images of Australia in China” and gathering information on the great Chinese poet Eastern Slope Su for Professor McLoughlin at Melbourne University (Ouyang, *Eastern Slope* 230), but these jobs are temporary and irregular. For most of the time, Dao is on the dole, at the bottom of the social ladder and unable to achieve the position that would deflect attention away from his racial and cultural background. His great hope of entering into the center of Australian society and to restore his masculine pride is dashed.

Dao is frustrated and angry, lashing out against what he views as the twin causes of his lack of success—Australia and women. He abuses Australia as a racist country: “[N]owhere else in Australia would Chinese be extended such welcome [. . .] only in brothels and casinos” (57). He criticizes Australians as “extremely snobbish,” “afraid of making mistakes,” “jealous and miserly,” “conservative,” “suspicious,” “fearful of confrontation,” and “fond of making empty promises” (169–75). He mocks Australia by comparing its history to the long and glorious past of his home country: “Australia is a country that originated in convicts, a country that rode on the sheep’s back, a country that few gave a damn about” (53); “what they termed history in a mere two hundred years is a miscellany of crammed indiscriminate and inspired facts that in Chinese terms would mostly be pared away” (52). He also puts down Australia by comparing it with more powerful Western countries: “Australia is but a small brother” (41). Dao is also a misogynist, regarding women merely as sexual objects at the same time as he collectively curses them as an “insatiable beast hungry for materialistic gains” (369). His misogyny can be understood as retaliation for his loss of masculine power. Chinese women desert him for white men, and Australian women use him for their own advantage. He hates women because they collude with the dominant masculinity, reinforcing his marginalization.

Dao does not physically abuse women—his violence is only verbal, or acted out in dreams and fantasies. In Dao’s mind (and that of his alter ego, Wu Liao), women turn into super-sexualized objects he can fantasize about and targets he wants to destroy: “Wu was so exhausted that all he could see in front of his eyes was the wall of the girl that stood inviting entry. In his sleep that night, he dreamt that he entered the girl like a bullet, deep into her until the wall broke” (66). Masculinity is here equated with sexual conquest and violence. Dao also feminizes Australia as part of his bid for masculine power. Wu Liao on one occasion masturbates while looking at pornographic magazines and ejaculates “by chance” onto a copy of Manning Clark’s *A History of Australia*, which is later found “partly covered in his semen, white Chinese semen” (59). This feminization of Australia also features in Ouyang’s poetry. In the poem “Fuck You, Australia,” the angry speaker projects a female gender onto Australia and “fucks” it, both in the sense of cursing and sexual

possession—"a country / flowing with gold and fuck-holes" (Ouyang, *Moon Over Melbourne* 34). Australia and poetry alike are feminized and figured as potential victims of the poet's rage and sexual aggression. It is through these figurative acts, presented as doomed bids for power by someone who has been rendered powerless, that Ouyang most violently—and most poignantly—articulates the acute sense of isolation experienced by the male migrant (see Ommundsen).

Dao's aggressive behavior illustrates what Connell identifies as "protest masculinity," "a response to powerlessness, a claim to the gendered position of power, a pressured exaggeration (bashing gays, wild driving) of masculine conventions" (Connell, *Masculinities* 111). Connell examines protest masculinity mainly in terms of social class, based on her observation of a group of young, underprivileged working-class Australian men. There are similarities and differences between the protest masculinity of Dao Zhuang and that of the young men discussed by Connell. In both cases, protest masculinity is a male "response to powerlessness, a claim to the gendered position of power" (111). But in the case of young working-class men in Australia, it is their underprivileged class position that denies them access to the "patriarchal dividend," whereas for Dao, it is race, combined with economic and social status. Moreover, the young working-class men and Dao differ in the way they express protest masculinity. While the young men resort to an exaggeration of Australian masculine behavior, such as bashing gay men and wild driving (111), Dao verbally vents his anger at his host country and women. Dao's protest masculinity resonates with the argument of Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Michael A. Messner:

Men of color, poor and working-class men, immigrant men, and gay men are often in very contradictory conditions at the nexus of intersecting systems of domination and subordination. In short, although they are oppressed by class, race, and/or sexual systems of power, they also commonly construct and display forms of masculinity as ways of resisting other men's power over them, as well as asserting power and privilege over women. (215)

Hurt in China, shattered in Australia, Dao Zhuang's masculine pride has, it would seem, nowhere to go. But instead of giving up, Dao opts for another tactic: returning to his home country. His reasoning is that, in China, he is not the old Dao but a new man. Apart from his name change from Dao Zhuang to Dole Zane, his identity has changed too: he is now an Australian citizen. In the eyes of Chinese, he is a *haigui*, a term coined by Chinese mainlanders to refer to "returnees from overseas." According to Wang Huiyao's book *Returning Times*, China first sent thirty teenage boys to study in America in 1872, ushering in an era of Chinese studying overseas in modern Chinese history. From the early twentieth century to 1949, small numbers of young Chinese who were either self-funded or

government-sponsored went to study in Europe, Japan, and America. After the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the Chinese government sent students to its communist allies, mostly the former Soviet Union. However, from 1963 to 1972, there were virtually no Chinese students going overseas due to the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relationships as well as the internal political turmoil in China. It was not until 1978 that the Chinese government under Deng Xiaoping's leadership restarted the initiative of sending students overseas, mostly to Western countries this time. This trend gained momentum in the following years, and the 1990s saw a considerable increase in the number of self-funded students, most of whom chose to stay in their host countries after they completed their education. To lure overseas Chinese students back to China to serve its undertaking of modernization, the Chinese government has put in place a range of policies including the famous "Hundreds of Talents' Plan," which started in 1994, and the more ambitious "Thousands of Talents' Plan" proposed in 2008. These policies offer privileges to overseas Chinese scholars by providing them with large amounts of research funds or granting them enviable social status.²

Male returnees who have received education in developed Western countries are seen as emblems of modernity and prosperity. Their *haigui* status enables them easy access to high social positions, at the same time as it makes them attractive to women. However, the undeniable fact is that while some returnees have achieved success, fame, or wealth abroad, a large number of them have not done well, and some badly. Dao is one of these losers or failures. Although his persona looks impressive—an Australian citizen with educational qualifications in both Chinese and English—his reality is different: he is unemployed, living on government benefits. As his sister Tao complains, his return is a threat to his family's reputation: "The worry is that once the word is out that you are not doing as well in Australia as people would imagine, our reputation as a family would be in jeopardy. People would start talking behind our backs" (Ouyang, *Eastern Slope* 105). To save both his family's and his own face, Dao has to conceal his real circumstances but remains tormented by the fear that they will be uncovered.

The China Dao encounters on his return is also new. Ten years earlier, China was in political turmoil, torn between pro-West radicals and communist conservatives. Dao is astonished at the pace with which socialist China is being Westernized and capitalized, and at the growing status of the entrepreneur as the new male ideal. Kam Louie argues that "throughout the 1990s, the powerful forces of industrialization and consumerism have pushed cultural artefacts, including masculinity, into the marketplace as commodities," and that "business success is now clearly a primary aim of moral-political education" (*Theorising* 55–56). It is no wonder that a large number of intellectuals have turned into businessmen. In "Chinese Intellectuals

Facing the Challenges of the New Century,” He Baogang observes,

Before 1992, even when Chinese intellectuals were “victims” suppressed by political powers, they still occupied a central place in society. However, as China moved faster toward the market economy in the 1990s, they have been gradually marginalized, while the new rich and the new pop stars have occupied the centre stage of the societal theatre.

As increasing economic freedom has provided Chinese intellectuals with opportunities to make profits, many of them have given up academic and governmental jobs to enter business and turn their cultural “capital” into financial capital. (270)

Louie’s *brain-brawn* masculinity, extended to include money, has become what can be called the *brass-brain-brawn* triad, the word order in the triad reflecting the order of importance of the three components. Dao observes that Chinese men, including his friends and schoolmates who used to be infatuated with literature and philosophy, are now “all for market economy” and “practicing capitalism” (Ouyang, *Eastern Slope* 84). A typical example is Ston Wan, a novelist-turned-entrepreneur who entertains Dao to a sumptuous dinner in one of the most expensive restaurants in Shanghai. Wan boasts that he can eat lobsters every day, go to Australia any time he feels like a rest, and afford to employ white people to work for him. Compared to this wealthy and arrogant Chinese man, Dao “felt very embarrassed” and “kept [his] silence and nodded [his] head, mechanically, not without appreciation” (41–43). Dao again falls short compared to a “real” man with a large amount of money in his pocket.

Dao once again finds himself in an awkward predicament. China, the country that gave birth to his *wen* masculinity and has valued it for much of its history, has now put it in jeopardy. And once again, he decides to strike the hegemonic bargain, using the strategy of deflection to divert attention from his lack of *brass* to his status as an Australian. By flaunting his Australian citizenship, Dao hopes to give the impression that he is a wealthy Western man. He speaks English and highlights his Australian identity in the presence of his Chinese audience at Red Cliff University. With remarks such as “Did anyone know who John Howard is? He is our Prime Minister” (184), he tries to distinguish himself from his fellow Chinese. His strategy seems to work: “In China, I was valued, not because I was Chinese, but because I was Australian” (296). As long as he keeps his Australian “face,” he is able to project dominant masculinity. However, it is a fragile identity and a dangerous ploy, and when his real situation is finally disclosed—“an impostor in China and a failure in Australia” (233)—he is humiliated and his masculinity thrown into crisis. As a modern scholar, Dao looks with nostalgia to traditional Chinese patriarchy, when scholars were granted power and rewarded with wealth and women. Unable

to fulfill his ambition in either Australia or China, he has nowhere to go. Returning to Australia, he feels defeated, trapped in a “no-man’s land” where his dreams remain elusive and his ideals are mocked. And while Dao Zhuang’s fate, and his reactions to it, may be extreme, he is by no means alone in his predicament.

The recent wave of immigration from mainland China to Australia started in the 1980s. According to *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, these migrants from mainland China were “predominantly men in the mid-20s to mid-30s age groups, and their level of educational qualifications was far higher than either the Chinese or Australian populations at large” (Jupp 218). Like Ouyang Yu and his character Dao Zhuang, many of these migrants were *wen men* or intellectuals in Chinese terms—writers, teachers, and journalists—before migrating to Australia. However, most of them had little or no English on arrival, no financial security, and little knowledge of how Western social and political systems operate. As a consequence, they were unable to pursue their earlier professions in Australia, instead having to retrain or seek unskilled, low-paid, and low-status jobs. Quite a few of these migrants have published fiction and life stories detailing their life in Australia, but unlike Ouyang Yu, most write in Chinese, not English, so their stories have not circulated in the Australian mainstream.

The majority of these male PRC writers were born in the 1950s and early 1960s, when China was isolated from the outside world. In their youth, they were inculcated with socialist ideology about gender. Under Mao’s leadership, the Chinese Communist Party made huge efforts to promote gender equality, bringing women into the workforce and legislating to protect women’s rights. However, the scholarship on Chinese women in Maoist China indicates that, although their social status was raised after the Chinese Communist Party gained power, Chinese women were still subject to patriarchy. As researcher Wang Zheng argues, “studies on gender and the Chinese socialist state have convincingly argued for the existence of a socialist patriarch” (519–20). These male writers were also exposed to patriarchal Confucian assumptions about gender, despite the iconoclastic campaigns launched by the Communist Party. China officially reopened its doors to the world in 1978, and Western ideologies began to impact Chinese intellectual circles from the mid-1980s. But Chinese intellectuals had not really digested Western ideologies such as gender norms by the time they went overseas. Therefore, though exposed to Western influences, the thinking of this group of male writers was still largely confined to traditional Chinese and socialist assumptions about gender when they migrated to Australia from the mid-1980s. At the same time, of course, the “new” gender norms were contested in Australia as well, and the patriarchal order very far from being extinct. In other words, the writers’ physical displacement from the PRC did not necessarily result in a transformation or adjustment of cultural and ideological conditioning. Patriarchal

assumptions frequently inform their work, as does the sense of a masculinity in crisis, undermined by forces over which they have little control.

When *wen* masculinity was reestablished as the elite masculinity in the post-Mao era in order to recruit intellectuals into the national undertaking of modernizing China, male intellectuals were at the center of Chinese society. However, when male Chinese intellectuals set foot in Australia, they encountered a different set of assumptions and practices associated with gender. The 1990s also saw a backlash against multiculturalism in Australia and an undercurrent of a new racism or “culturalism” (Ang 109) targeting Asians. This was overtly expressed by Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party, and covertly seconded by John Howard and his Liberal government. The anti-Asian sentiments that came to light during the 1990s were partly informed by the “yellow peril” specter that has been haunting the Australian national imaginary ever since colonial times, but it was expressed primarily in terms of culture, not race. It is this multiculturalism under pressure that Dao encounters in Australia, a reality that differs sharply from his expectations. The false promises of multiculturalism also haunt the speaker of Ouyang Yu’s poem “Moon Over Melbourne,” in which Australia is lulled into a “multicultural sleep” while the lonely migrant cries out in agony at an indifferent moon (Ouyang, *Moon Over Melbourne* 67). The social and cultural climate of Australia in the ’90s erects barriers preventing Dao, and others like him, from climbing the social ladder, while white males (often less qualified than they are) are high up on the ladder flaunting their male power. Male Chinese intellectuals, whose masculinity is defined by their ability to use their *wen* talents, find that their masculinity has become an empty signifier. Other texts that address the predicament of Chinese intellectuals in Australia include Liu Guande’s *My Fortune in Australia* and Huangfu Jun’s *Australia—Beautiful Lies*, which were translated into English by J. Bruce Jacob and Ouyang Yu and published together as *Bitter Peaches and Plums* (1995). *Bleak Sydney* by Yan Tiesheng (2001), *Humanity Lost* by Li Wei (1994), and *Bungee Australia* by Liu Ao (1999) are Chinese-language texts featuring male migrants who have come to Australia to realize dreams of success or fortune, only to end up in despair and disillusionment. By contrast, and perhaps in response to the bleak picture painted in these novels, other Chinese writers have published texts in which male Chinese migrants have overcome difficulties to become successful in their adopted country. These include *Australian Dream* (2005) by Jin Kaiping, an autobiographical account of a student who becomes a businessman; *Why Go Abroad: A Report from the Other Side of the Ocean* (1997) by Ying Ge; Zhong Yazhang’s novel *Living in Sydney* (2008); and, in English, *Mao’s Last Dancer* (2003) by Li Chunxin, who achieved success both as a ballet dancer and in finance (see Huang).

In an era of social and cultural change on a massive scale, and of increasing cross-cultural traffic, ideals and norms for masculinity and masculine behavior are

changing and will continue to change, both in China and in the vast Chinese diaspora. The rise of the entrepreneur at the cost of the scholar has marked Chinese society since the 1980s, but other changes are also under way. The late twentieth century and early twenty-first century witnessed an exodus of young Chinese students to other countries to pursue education, and this trend is gaining momentum with the rapid expansion of the middle class in China. Upon their return, these students bring back not only expertise and knowledge but also gender and cultural practices from their host countries, which will further complicate the Chinese cultural landscape within which masculinity is situated. Globalization and transnationalism not only impact on the political and cultural regimes of traditionally migrant-exporting nations such as China but also on those of migrant-receiving countries like Australia. As Australia's interaction with its neighboring Asian countries progresses and more Asian migrants are absorbed into its population, hegemonic Australian masculinities based on Anglo-Celtic values will be combined with a variety of Asian masculinities. This evolution will be gradual, but as *The Eastern Slope Chronicle* demonstrates, it is not always smooth. Indeed, as clearly depicted in the novel, the particular generation of migrants to which Dao Zhuang belongs have experienced change on an unprecedented scale, change that has left them stranded in what to them may seem to be no-man's land, or at least a land with no place for men of their particular background. Growing up during the Cultural Revolution, coming of age during China's gradual opening to the world only to have his aspirations dashed in Tiananmen Square, Dao (like Ouyang Yu) has witnessed major cultural shifts in his home country and will witness further change when he returns to find China fully engaged in the market economy. Migration, which may have seemed the ultimate step on the path to success in the new, global world, brought further challenges that Dao and his friends were ill equipped to handle: the encounter with a country caught between the rhetoric of multiculturalism and a reality of anti-Asian sentiment, a social system in which Anglo Australia remained the dominant norm, and a gender economy in which Asian men were disadvantaged, sexually as well as economically. Dao's sense of disempowerment, his impotent rage, speaks eloquently not just of his personal predicament but of a generation of migrants for whom the brave new world of "the Asian century" (whatever that will bring) comes too late to rescue them from a perception of personal and professional failure. "I am a futureless Australian," concludes Dao on his return to Melbourne, and, as his friend Warne laments to his long-suffering wife, "You are right. I am worthless. All I used to be able to do was write poetry and now I am nothing but a man of pain. You should be ashamed of me" (Ouyang, *Eastern Slope* 348, 382). As for Ouyang Yu himself, his abundant literary output is proof that masculine pain is not always impotent, but can be a powerful incentive for creativity.

Notes

1. See, for example, Ommundsen; Wang and Zhao; Lee; Louie, "Returnee Scholars."
2. See, for example, Ma; Huiyao Wang 66-94.

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