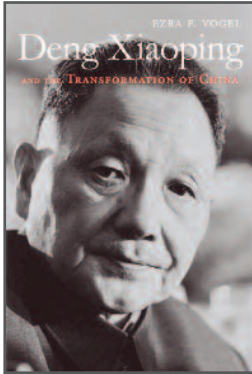


Book reviews



Ezra Vogel,
Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China,
Cambridge, MA, and London, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011, 876 pp.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS HUCHET

Harvard University professor Ezra Vogel is one of the few major American Asia experts who have a deep knowledge of both contemporary China and Japan. His works on Japan, *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* (1979), and on China, *One Step Ahead in China: Guangdong under Reform* (1989), have impressed generations of students as well as political and economic decision-makers and transformed contemporary Asia's image among the Western public.

His biography of Deng Xiaoping has similar ambitions. Reflecting on a subject that could "help Americans understand key developments in Asia" in the early twenty-first century (Preface, p. xi), he declares unhesitatingly: "The biggest issue in Asia is China, and the man who most influenced China's modern trajectory is Deng Xiaoping" (p. xi). From this certainty stem both the qualities and criticism that can be raised about this book.

There already are many biographies on Deng in English: by Harrison E. Salisbury (1992), Ruan Ming (1992), Richard Evans (1994), Benjamin Yang (1998), and Michael Marti (2002), as well as special issues of journals devoted to contemporary China, including *The China Quarterly* (1993) and *China Perspectives* (1997), from which Vogel has drawn generously. But Vogel's biography of the "Little Helmsman" is to date the most accomplished and comprehensive. Unlike previous biographies, he has profited from the passage of time since Deng's death in 1997 and has been able to draw upon several works in Chinese published in recent years on Deng's life and public activities. There are, of course, new editions of the *Chronicles of Deng Xiaoping's Thoughts*⁽¹⁾ for the 1904-1974 period, as well as those covering 1974-1997, published in 2009 and 2004 respectively by the CCP Central Document Research Office. Although very formal, these collections (nearly 1,400 pages for the two volumes combined) help furnish some important details regarding Deng's public activities, especially between 1949 and 1978. But Vogel has also been able to consult several recent works of historians, Chinese journalists, and, crucially, former colleagues of Deng who have published accounts of their own direct roles in activities alongside the Little Helmsman, especially two works of Yu Guanyuan published in 2004 and 2005.⁽²⁾ Moreover, he conducted hundreds of hours of interviews with Deng's family members, first and second circle collaborators, and Party his-

torians, as well as foreign leaders and ambassadors who had dealings with China since the 1960s. All told, these interviews represent years of effort from 2006 to 2010, and a quick review of footnotes indicates their relevance to almost the whole of Deng's life.

The book's most interesting contributions, as against previous works, concern the eras of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), the Hua Guofeng interregnum (from Mao's death in September 1976 until December 1978), and the period when economic reforms were being launched – 1978-1984. Not that the rest of the book is uninteresting, but other publications have largely covered the period during which Deng is completely identified with China's history, rendering it less original.

For instance, Vogel's book has brought out new elements on the period of internal exile (near Nanchang City in Jiangxi Province) between October 1969 and February 1973, when Deng worked in a tractor spare parts factory. It brings out the extent to which a good deal of Deng's determination to transform China had its origins in this period. Banished from Beijing and having no political role, Deng could see the extent of Maoism's ravages, and during long solitary walks he ruminated over his strategy for change (pp. 52-57).

This is likewise the case for the period of Deng's return to work in February 1973 until April 1976, when Mao again removed him from power on accusations of organising popular demonstrations after Zhou Enlai's death. Vogel shows how Deng had to constantly steer prudently through decisions faced with checks and suspicions on the part of Mao's sycophants, especially his wife Jiang Qing. He throws light on Deng's working method during this period, which he never abandoned. Deng masked his intentions and aims with respect to the dominant ideology. He got his speeches vetted by Party intellectuals close to his thinking so as to avoid any charge of revisionism and to render them acceptable to Mao and those surrounding him. Deng was reputed (even criticised by Mao) for his pragmatism in the early 1960s. In 1961, Deng backed Liu Shaoqi, then the regime's No. 2, who violently criticised Mao over the Great Leap Forward's impact and who advocated a more realistic approach to agriculture, industry, and education. But Deng's actions during this period continued to rest on Marxist-Leninist beliefs. From the mid-1970s onward, and especially after Mao's death, Deng set about tweaking communist ideology. He lent ideological trappings to the Party's Left at crucial moments (1979, 1984, 1989, and 1992) when "capitalist drift in economic reforms" were at issue by professing principles and slogans that sounded more and more hollow and divorced from China's economic real-

1. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (CCP Central Document Research Office), *Deng Xiaoping nianpu* (Chronicle of Deng Xiaoping's Thoughts), Beijing, Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2004, 2009.

2. An economist and director from 1975 of the State Council Political Research Office and of the Economic Research Institute under the all-powerful former State Planning Commission (before it was renamed the National Development and Reform Commission in 1998), Yu Guanyuan was closely engaged in overseeing the publication of Deng's historic speeches at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Central Committee in December 1978, which definitively sealed his wresting of power from Hua Guofeng and the launch of the reform and opening policy. Yu was one of Zhao Ziyang's close advisors on economic reforms during the 1980s.

ities. It was this method that helped Deng promote his economic agenda. First in 1978 and then in 1992, he led China towards a new economic system where no communist party had ventured (end of planning, private property, stock exchanges, and private entrepreneurs in the Party), to the extent of creating a completely schizophrenic situation as regards Marxist-Leninist-Maoist dogma. However, as Vogel agilely shows, this matters little: rid of Maoists while preserving all the trappings of the Founding Father, Deng found it more important to develop China and also... to ensure the Party's survival.

Many other interesting points in Vogel's account covering the 1979-1980 period concern Deng's management style, his choice of confidants, the administration's functioning, and the preparations for Party leaders' succession after his generation's passing (Chapters 12 and 13, pp. 349-393), showing that Deng neglected no aspect. In the ideological arena, despite criticisms of Mao, he avoided the trap of Khrushchev-style report and de-Stalinisation, as he knew that he needed the ideological cement and Mao's image to tighten his grip on the CCP's ranks. He also avoided a personality cult. He surrounded himself with much younger leaders who demonstrated the ability to resolve the myriad problems China was facing. His choices of Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and Wan Li are well known. But as former secretary general of the CCP secretariat in charge of all administrative matters (1956-1966), Deng knew more than anyone else the importance of choice of personnel. Until his final days he had a say in nominations to the CCP and army leadership. Vogel writes about his management style: "If Mao were like an emperor above the clouds, reading history and novels and issuing edicts, Deng was more like a commanding general, checking carefully to see that his battle plans were properly staffed and implemented" (p. 377). Vogel also describes how, except from in the restricted family circle, Deng avoided familiarity in his dealings and always maintained a certain distance with his interlocutors. From one day to the next, he had no qualms about asking a confidant to resign from his posts if he considered it to be in the nation's interest. He did that with Hu in 1987 and Zhao in 1989, and threatened Jiang Zemin with a similar fate in 1992 if he did not reboot economic reforms (p. 679).

While this biography gives an account of the extent and reach of economic and social changes in China during the period when Deng enjoyed complete power, in the end it is difficult to distinguish between the leader's actions and the country's history. Of course, it is a difficult exercise given that Deng's history is so enmeshed with that of China. For instance, his decision to crush the student movement in the spring of 1989, or even his southern tour in early 1992, took all of China in an irreversible direction. Nevertheless, the extent of the transformation cannot be credited to one man. Despite cautionary notes over this crucial issue early in the last chapter of the book (Chapter 24, p. 693), Vogel offers a series of transformations as having been guided and directed by Deng: the building of a nation open to the outside world, a modern meritocracy, a CCP headed by team leadership, the passage from a rural society to an urban one, and the bureaucracy's dynamism in the local economy. Even so, and despite Deng's leadership qualities, these changes are far beyond the capacity and responsibility of a single man.

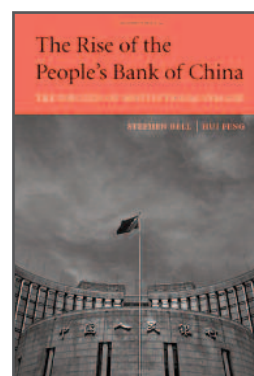
Similarly, Deng's darker side, his failures and the negative consequences of his actions, have been largely ignored in the book. However, in the last chapter, by way of conclusion, Vogel invokes a series of issues under the heading "Challenges for Deng's Successors" (p. 711): endemic corruption, curtailment of freedoms, environmental pollution, and challenges to the

Party's legitimacy. All of these issues, dismissed in two pages – negative consequences and limits to Deng's public action – deserve a more meticulous analysis so as to afford a more balanced view of Deng individually. More generally, Deng's responsibility for the veritable absence of political reform during his reign (especially the 1979 "Democracy Wall" and the 1989 crisis over the student movement) is dealt with superficially. All this unfortunately limits the book's reach.

But Vogel has mainly sought to show that Deng succeeded where all other generations of modernising leaders floundered for more than 150 years, making him one of the most important personalities in Chinese history over the past two centuries and of world history from the latter half of the twentieth century to the start of the twenty-first. Moreover, Deng's imprint on the current Party regime is still alive. Despite the limitations of Vogel's exercise, this imposing biography (nearly 900 pages) is bound to serve as a work of reference for a Western public seeking to understand how China has been able to transform as deeply and rapidly as it has done since the late 1970s.

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Stephen Bell and Hui Feng,
The Rise of the People's Bank of China: The Politics of Institutional Change,

Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2013, 376 pp.

HORACIO ORTIZ

This book proposes a history of the Chinese central bank, the People's Bank of China (PBC), since the beginning of the "opening and reform" period. The book tracks the growing importance of this institution in monetary policy as part of the changes at the top of the Chinese state and the Communist Party (CCP). The book is organised into two main parts. The first is a chronological presentation of changes in the PBC, distinguishing between two main periods: 1979 to 1992, and 1992 to the present. The second part of the book is concerned with the bank's major policies, in particular how it deals with inflation, its exchange rate policy, and regulation of the financial sector.

As a major institution of the Chinese financial system, the PBC also plays a crucial role in the global financial system. A review of its recent history is therefore extremely welcome. This book presents clearly the major regulatory and policy changes of the last 30 years, indicating their links to negotiations within the CCP in response to domestic and global macro-economic events.

The book's authors, Stephen Bell and Hui Feng, are from the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland,

Australia. Stephen Bell is Professor and Head of the school, focusing his research on governance and institutional development, and adopting China as a topic of research in recent years. His colleague, research fellow Hui Feng, has been working on contemporary China's economic transformation, with a particular focus on the financial sector.

The authors show how the PBC became an important centre of decision-making for monetary policy in the 1990s, after then-vice-premier Zhu Rongji and other senior CCP officials used it to foster their careers by proposing an agenda of liberal economic policy. In particular, the PBC became the institution in charge of responding to the inflationary episodes that marked the 1980s, and during the 1990s took pre-eminence over the Ministry of Finance in conducting monetary policy. This position was maintained and reinforced during the Hu-Wen decade, in particular under the direction of Wen Jiabao, who had overseen financial matters with Zhu Rongji in the past.

The second part of the book shows how this rise of the PBC occurred through specific contingent historical events in a series of pragmatic reactions that reflected the balance of power between different ministries and ideological sectors of the CCP. The PBC was in charge of a battle against inflation that partly countered the interests of state-owned enterprises and of certain ministries more inclined to use bank lending and monetary creation to foster GDP growth. The bank was the institution that sided most strongly against the devaluation of the RMB in the aftermath of the Asian Financial Crisis. It was also at the centre of negotiations to relax the RMB peg to the US dollar in 2005, in particular under the governorship of Zhou Xiaochuan. The latter, whose father had been a mentor of Jiang Zemin, was appointed by Zhu Rongji in 2002, and continued to be in charge through the Hu-Wen decade and up until today.

Although some factual elements are only superficially analysed, or even wrong (the analysis of the reform of stock markets seems to stop in 2006), the book presents a very informative overview of the changes of the PBC in the last 30 years. The method is varied. The book is based on secondary literature, the analysis of specific regulations, and interviews carried out with high-ranking officials. Due to anonymity clauses, no attempt is made to situate the declarations of the interviewees in their social context and personal strategies. Their remarks are most often used as proof of what they assert, without further critique.

The main theoretical framework of the book, spelled out in the introductory chapters, is concerned with the literature of institutional change. The authors debate the theories of path-dependence, the idea that institutions command individuals' behaviour, and settle for what they call a "nuanced view" according to which individuals are constrained by organisational rules but also have margins of play and creativity within the historical contingencies and ideological environments in which they operate. In spite of the long introductory chapter discussing theories of institutional change, the main question asked by the book is framed by two theoretical presuppositions that are never tackled explicitly by the authors. The question is expressed in the first three pages. The book seeks to account for the rise of the PBC as part of the attempt to "build a sound market-oriented monetary and financial infrastructure" within a "transitional (and thereby immature) financial system" in the context of a "post-communist transition" common to "developing countries." The authors ask, "how are we to explain the Bank's rising authority within the steep hierarchy of the Chinese party-state, where the party elite has traditionally guarded its monetary and financial policy autonomy? Our answer is that the rise of the PBC has been based on a re-

lationship of growing mutual dependency with the party leadership" (all quotes above pp. 3-5). The presuppositions embedded in these questions are not spelled out systematically in the book. Nevertheless, they structure the analysis in a way that deserves attention, not only because it accounts for many of the book's contradictions, but also because it is found in other accounts of the economic changes in China over the last 30 years.

The first presupposition is the idea that a "Western" model of "free markets" is superior to the "Leninist tradition," and that the PBC's evolution is marked by its "quest for a market-oriented economy" against the "constraints" "inherited" from the past (on a very fast count, these terms appear at least 20 times in the book). These two poles are unfortunately never analysed systematically at either the theoretical or empirical level. It is not clear what the authors see as standing for "free market" or for "Leninism," or what is "traditional" about an experience that, in 1979, was at most 30 to 40 years old in China. At no point do the authors specify which central banks belong to the "West" or why, in spite of the open differences between the European Central Bank and the US Federal Reserve, for instance, they should be considered to operate in the same way.

The authors do not attempt to justify what, according to their view, makes the "market-oriented" model more "sophisticated" and less "inefficient." This leads the authors to confusing and contradictory assertions. All the changes of the PBC analysed in the book are compared to a "modern" "Western" and "sophisticated" "free market" model, which the authors contrast with a Chinese financial system described as "immature," "underdeveloped," and "flawed." Yet they occasionally contradict this analytic framework by quoting Tang Tsou ("Chinese Politics at the Top: Factionalism or Informal Politics? Balance-of-Power or a Game to Win All?", *China Journal*, No. 34, 1995, pp. 95-156) as saying: "Chinese history is so complex that it provides many hard tests for theories, models, and general propositions based on Western cases. In turn, the Chinese experience might form the basis for new general propositions enriching the theories and models that have been built on the Western experience" (p. 14). Empirically, the authors consider all tools that go beyond the use of interest rates to manage money creation, such as directly telling banks where to lend, as belonging to the "legacy" of the "Leninist tradition" and its flaws. But in a few instances, they hold that this gives the PBC a wider array of tools than other central banks and that therefore "China is better positioned to foster stability and growth compared with major Western economies in terms of the policy options at its disposal" (p. 208). This leads to considerable misinterpretation. For example, the Chiang Mai initiative is an agreement reached between several Asian governments in 2004 to prevent foreign exchange volatility, in particular short-term speculation, by using reserves to have a direct impact on prices. The authors interpret it as part of an internationalisation that they feel goes hand-in-hand with a less controlled market, even though this agreement goes in exactly the opposite direction (p. 256). Instead of reading the particular tools and policies of the PBC as a specific result of Chinese contemporary history, the authors insist on comparing it to an idealised neo-classic economic model, without enquiring how this model was appropriated and intentionally transformed by the people whose actions they analyse.

The second major theoretical presupposition concerns assessment of the power of the PBC. For the authors, this power is not measured by the centrality of the bank in decisions concerning monetary policy, but rather by how much closer the PBC's policies draw to the neo-classical injunction to fight inflation. This implies, in turn, an analytical distinction between the

PBC and the CCP. According to the authors, the PBC's application of this policy proves it to be "independent" or at least "autonomous" from the "government" and from the "the old Leninist state-planning system that refuses to abandon its authority in the financial sector and politicises monetary policy" (p. 108). Again, this leads to contradictory statements. The authors start by claiming that they consider the independence of the PBC in relation to the "elite of the CCP," and propose a distinction between "politicians" and "bureaucrats" without defining either of these terms: "In this book, 'elite' refers exclusively to the Communist Party leaders, as it is useful to differentiate politicians and bureaucrats in this study" (p. 48). Later on, they remark, "the vagueness in interpreting the incentives and preferences of senior bureaucrats is also due to their dual identities as government officials as well as party cadres. Even the notion of 'bureaucrat' is blurred with that of 'politician'" (p. 126). The idea of "independence from government," which is already of dubious usefulness in considering central banks in the U.S. or Europe, is here based on a very poor analysis of the logic of political and economic power in China.

Moreover, this analytic framework actually contradicts the description offered by the authors themselves. Indeed, they claim that the PBC applies policies against inflation and therefore becomes independent of the Party elite thanks to the action of Zhu Rongji, then vice-premier, and the subsequent actions of Dai Xiaolong and Zhou Xiaochuan, both long-term allies of Zhu and appointed as governors of the bank under his premiership. It is hard to see how this implies that tackling inflation was not a government priority at the time, or, analytically, where this "independence from government" really lies. This discourse has been used elsewhere since the 1990s, contending that the central bank has to be isolated from the inflationary temptations of governments, especially before general competitive elections. This analytic framework makes it impossible to grasp the specificities of the role of the CCP in the distribution of power in China, leading the authors to qualify the monetary financial system as an "awkward combination" (p. 84) of central planning and marketisation and growth.

The analytic framework that the authors start with, attempting to analyse the PBC within a "reconfiguration of institutional relationships between the state and the market, between party and government organs, and between the traditional planning and market-oriented elements within the party-state" seems to confine them to categories that, unlike Weberian ideal-types, do not produce clarity but rather lead to statements about reality being "awkward" or "vague." The authors remark that the PBC is part of the recentralisation of power in the state's hands after 1979, while they analyse how it becomes a centre of expertise drawing in part on a global epistemic community. Yet, instead of analysing the creation of a technocratic centre of power that is intrinsically part of the CCP and of the Chinese state at a time when these institutions have been transformed by entering a global arena that they have helped to modify, the authors base their analysis on categories that appeal to the neo-classic enthusiasm about "bold and radical reforms" (p. 295) for a project that even the IMF is criticising today.

The book offers a rich synthesis of the changes in policy and regulation in central banking in China over the last 30 years. Nevertheless, it would have probably benefited from a more empirically-oriented analytical framework that takes into account the specificities of Chinese contemporary history.

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Tami Blumenfield and Helaine Silverman (eds),
Cultural Heritage Politics in China,
New York, Springer, 2013, 297 pp.

KATIANA LE MENTEC

Tami Blumenfield, a filmmaker and ethnologist who has focused on the Na people of Yunnan, teamed up with Helaine Silverman, an anthropologist specialising in Peruvian archaeology and cultural policies, to edit this volume on China's cultural heritage. The theme echoes an inescapable reality of the past decades and the subject of innumerable academic studies. With 15 contributions, the editors offer a discussion of the way in which heritage is protected and administered in China, by whom, for what purpose, and with what results. Their conclusion – it is a complex reality (p. 18) – resonates with the views of the book's contributors.

The chapters decipher *acts of heritage* – Laura Jane Smith's concept cited by Gary Sigley (p. 239) – concerning natural sites, villages, worship places (local, Daoist, Buddhist), ritual practices, trade routes (such as for tea), or excavations. Each author presents a special configuration, a combination of actors, ways of action, and issues. The multiple situations offer a glimpse of the variety of personages engaged in the heritage protection process and in tourism projects generally: villagers (Han or ethnic minorities), local elites, members of religious communities, small businesses, leaders of major companies, officials (national, regional, and local), UNESCO representatives, and tourists (Chinese and foreign). The authors examine their attempts, motivations, and interests as well as monopolies, conflicts, mobilisations, negotiations, strategies, and competitions.

The book presents a vast palette of heritage projects. William Nitzky's analysis focuses on UNESCO-initiated participative projects in which the authorities have trouble accepting community participation. Curtis Ashton examines innovative initiatives by administrators of a temple-museum in Beijing caught up in municipal politics during the Olympic Games. Heather Peters retraces the failures UNESCO's recommendations met with at Lijiang in Yunnan Province and the reasons for the Naxi people's gradual migration from the old city. Zhu Yujie and Li Na look into the leeway of local actors in the sacred Emei Mountain, a World Heritage and mass tourism site. Liu Tzu-kai sheds light on a museologist's work on heritage preservation in her native Wa minority village in remote Yunnan. One of the book's great strengths is that the authors narrate the history of sites and the adoption and evolution of cultural policies. Zhao Wei, for instance, analyses centuries of people's enrolment in a local cult as well as ritual and economic practices linked to its pilgrimage site, the heritage designation process, and relocation of villages. The contexts are explained through various angles. For instance, Su Xiaobo concentrates on small Han businessmen's role in mass tourism in Lijiang's old city.

Well known issues (economic, ideological, identity; national, regional, local) surrounding heritage sites inform the volume touching on all contexts.

Three chapters deal with geopolitical issues. Gary Sigley and Zhou Yongming show how the Yunnan authorities and those in one of the border villages rely on ancient international routes – deemed heritage sites – to promote a new identity brand in order to socially reconfigure their space. From “peripheral sites” they are presented as “bridges” with the outside world allowing them to position themselves at the “centre” of a globalised China. Jeff Adams offers a fascinating account of several issues relating to submerged heritage, which has attracted massive national investment. He sees them as genuine instruments of soft power on the global chessboard: the submerged wrecks are presented as a vector of national pride (highlighting both Chinese civilisation’s maritime golden age and its current technical capacity to work under water) as well as a symbolic and legal means of pressure in the context of sovereignty disputes over islands in the South China Sea and a diplomatic tool to illustrate ancient cultural links with countries being courted (such as Kenya).

What characterises the book is undoubtedly its profound heterogeneity. The authors are drawn from diverse fields – anthropology, law, geography, architecture, Sinology, heritage studies, and gender studies – and some of them act as experts or consultants for public or private heritage projects. The ethnographies are of unequal depth. While some authors narrate, sometimes forcefully, the details of their methodology and paint vivid portraits of people encountered, others dispense with them in favour of a major thematic or theoretical contextualisation. Nitzky offers synthetic digressions – didactic, of course – alongside rare and fascinating cases (such as cultural mapping) rather too quickly reviewed. The degree of argumentation and theorisation in different chapters in the book also varies considerably. At the book’s outset, Tang Zijun declares that the current legislative system does not favour sustained development of China’s heritage resources. The reader – keen to understand the legal workings – is left clueless while faced with a text that declares but fails to explain the flow of legislation, the absence of rules and regulations, and ignores the possible inter-provincial distinctions. Margaret Swain engages in a highly specialised discussion on cosmopolitanism to explain her theoretical approach to the existence of the Han government’s own vision of cosmopolitanism. She relies on two classical Chinese concepts (*tianxia* and *shijie*) – vernacular terms that numerous actors use these days – and which she elevates to the category of scientific analysis. She then illustrates her proposition through projects deemed eco-touristic implicating minorities in Yunnan – whose description may provoke reactions among ethnologists familiar with the region and dealing with local realities in less idealistic and more nuanced manner. Meanwhile, contributors have a general tendency (exemplified by Liu Tzu-kai) to apply notions and theories fashioned in other cultural spheres without saying so. While the mobilisation of inescapable references in matters of cultural policies is most useful to readers seeking an overall view of the subject, this way of writing nevertheless poses the question of the relevance of the analyses. If neither contextualised nor well argued, the importation of theories hardly convinces specialists. Zhou Yongming rightly points out that concepts such as “globalisation” are not transposable (p. 249).

The disparate chapters have been rather artificially arranged. Indeed, the parts group texts according to the types of heritage discussed (listed/not listed by UNESCO, museum or route), whereas the reality described does not quite adhere to such divisions. Contrary to the impression the title might give, the book is not intended as a comprehensive, overarching, or orderly presentation of the theme. The collection of texts, each offering localised information, comes across as a voyage during which the reader gleans snip-

pets of a vast subject. The introduction gives a broad outline of the context for the non-specialist, stressing the case of minorities and political issues. Gradually the neophyte learns of the existence of heritage protection bureaux, some laws and administrative workings. The compartmentalised chapters show numerous repetitions. Those seeking a general reflection on heritage policies in China might wish the editors had attempted a deeper approach by letting the texts interact, thereby infusing dynamism to the book as a whole.

It would also have been judicious to identify and discuss the contributors’ viewpoints in the introduction. Most of them are committed to heritage protection, favouring the UNESCO model or a solution to improve conservation following the criteria of that international institution. For instance, Zhou Yongming and Li Na deplore the fact that protection is oriented towards economic benefit and suggest the setting up of regulatory agencies. The book is replete with albeit discretely stated value judgements and presumptions alongside feelings that are never cleared up. Scientific readers might note this absence of distance and deem it a weakness that could lead to truncated or even biased argumentation. Zhao Wei criticises the lack of authenticity of a temple rebuilt a few metres from the old one and says the latter ought to have been subject to a protection programme. The book’s editors likewise voice concerns in the introduction over the “pattern of razing buildings” (p. 19). There is no mention of the practice in China of the faithful periodically destroying temples to rebuild them using new materials so as to more effectively honour the deities. Just as Chinese conceptions are glossed over in the book, the grading and conservation of vestiges prior to the UNESCO conventions are simply ignored, although they have been practised for centuries in different forms. In her highly didactic work on museum policies (*Museums in China: The Politics of Representation After Mao*, Boydell & Brewer, 2014), Marzia Varutti takes note of the antiquity of indigenous measures and conceptions. They appear in numerous local accounts, for instance, in Yunyang (Chongqing), where historical annals published in 1541 identify and grade vestiges of the past (*guji*) and where headstones mentions funds set aside for periodic renovations.

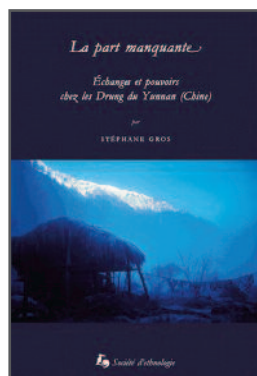
These examples illustrate the authors’ positions with regard to heritage protection, taken at face value and considered an ethnocentric objective – without questioning or comparing with possible indigenous equivalents. Su Xiaobo, who has worked on the notion of authenticity, briefly touches on the subject but only in the chapter’s conclusion. The approach chosen in the book inevitably leads to the obliteration of two basic actors. First, UNESCO, its officials and consultants with their own motivations, are engaged in strategies and develop modes of action. Second, the researcher – it is clear from a reading of this book – is often implicated in local issues. It is only the chapters by Liu Tsu-kai and Gary Sigley that truly question the values these actors attribute to heritage and analyse their role. Epistemological reflection on the role of researchers – especially ethnologists – in the context of protection of cultural practices has, however, been studied in depth in other cultural spheres such as in the Americas. Stevan Harrell’s text implicitly notes these defects. Happily, his concluding chapter in the book places indigenous conceptions at the centre of the discussion. He shows that due to numerous local and international issues, cultural protection practices in China follow Western characteristics (a model favouring a certain authenticity) and Chinese ones (absence of distinction between what is old, preserved, and “authentic” and what is new, rebuilt, and copied). The reader (or could it be the contributors?) are invited to take a step back and consider the observed practices and sites as cultural products. As for the

question of their authenticity – which so offends Western positions faced with abundant reworkings in China – the author prefers to consider the value attached to them by the Chinese themselves, who are the actors and participants.

Despite the criticisms made above, this book will be of much use to informed readers: researchers, students, those new to the Chinese world, consultants, and those passionate about heritage protection. The contributions offer an exceedingly rich panorama of multiple situations observable in contemporary China and give a good account of complex local realities, going beyond mere legislations and rules that appear uniform. Containing some original gems and detailed ethnographic case studies, the book completes academic work in the domain and opens up a multitude of research avenues: museum-temples, cultural mapping projects, study of narratives proposed by Cornelius Holtorf and suggested in the introduction (p. 19), or even indigenous conceptions and practices linked to heritage and conservation (those of the Han, the Naxi, or Tibetans – not taken as homogenous groups – but also the Japanese, the Fon people, and the Aymaras, for example) and their interactions with a globalised Western model. The book brings out the dynamism of this theme and the need to pursue this line of reflection. Those seeking to further pursue the issue of heritage and museums in China might wish to consult two recent works: the special issue on "China: the State at the Museum" of the journal *Gradhiva* in 2012, and Kirk A. Denton's *Exhibiting the Past: Historical Memory and the Politics of Museums in Postsocialist China* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2014).

■ Translated by N. Jayaram.

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Stéphane Gros,
La Part manquante: Échanges et pouvoirs chez les Drung du Yunnan (The missing share: Exchange and power among the Drung of Yunnan),
Nanterre, Société d'ethnologie, 2012,
588 pp.

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The Drung, or Dulong, are a social group of a few thousand people living mainly in the Dulong River valley of Southwest China at the frontiers of Myanmar and Tibet. There are still a few elderly Drung women alive today whose faces were tattooed when they were girls, and for the Chinese, photographs of these tattoos have come to symbolise the "savage" and "exotic" (p. 42) character of the remote borderlands of Yunnan Province. Until the 1960s, the valley did not have a road connecting it to the outside world, and even nowadays, it is sometimes cut off for several months of

the year due to snow; anthropologist Stéphane Gros was once stuck in the valley during one of these snow-ins. He has been conducting research in the region since 1998, and brings an impressive depth of ethnographic, linguistic, and historical work to *La Part manquante: Échanges et pouvoirs chez les Drung du Yunnan* (The missing share: Exchange and power among the Drung of Yunnan), his monograph on the Drung people.

The Chinese state recognises 56 *minzu*, or "nationalities," of which the Drung are one of the smallest. As such they enjoy political recognition, even as they continue to be viewed as poor and backward by their more powerful neighbours. The idea of *minzu* originated in Stalin's Russia and migrated to Communist China, where it took on a life of its own as a foundation of the state system for overseeing frontier peoples. Anthropological studies of ethnic minorities in China have deconstructed the state's categories to expose the epistemological process at work in identity politics,⁽¹⁾ suggesting that the nationalities rarely match the social identities of the people classed within them. This entails tremendous political effort to produce ideological cohesion – to make the nationalities work for the nation.⁽²⁾

If this approach sees nationalities such as the Drung as products of the state, then by contrast the Zomia theory that has gained ground in recent years would see them as inhabitants of a "stateless" space – making their mountain villages a site of refuge and resistance amid the network of highlands that criss-cross Southeast Asia.⁽³⁾

Between these two theoretical orientations, Gros traces his own path. "It would be profitable to see the Drung not only as victims or as fugitives," he tells us, "but also as actors within an encompassing hierarchical system" that partially but not wholly defines them (p. 29). Thus, his approach favours Drung agency against the backdrop of broader socio-political processes.

In the first two chapters, *La Part manquante* examines the interplay of local and national politics of identity. This is a complex opening to the book, as it explores the place of the Drung in Chinese ethnology as well as indigenous systems of nomenclature and the language-based identities of ethnic minorities inhabiting northwest Yunnan and adjacent parts of Myanmar. Among these minorities, the Drung are an interesting case study because their revolutionary history within China hinged on being recognised as "primitive communists" who could make a "direct transition" to Communism (p. 99). Gros notes that "Identification delimits spaces, properties, and immutable essences; it produces identity" (p. 79). The Communist ethnological process identified and thus transformed the Drung from "pygmies, slaves, and tattooed [people]" (the title of Chapter One) into socialist subjects. Through oral history, Gros shows us that the Drung actively inscribed their participation in this process.

Chapters Three and Four explore the history of Drung relations with neighbouring social groups, and their role in the ethno-politics of northwest Yunnan. Beyond the direct oversight of the Chinese empire, Tibetan and Naxi chiefs dominated the area until the first half of the twentieth century. Gros draws the reader's attention to the interdependence of ethnic groups in a

1. Dru Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1991; *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2004; Ralph Litzinger, *Other Chinas: The Yao and the Politics of National Belonging*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2000; Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2000.
2. Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2011 (Foreword by Benedict Anderson).
3. Willem Van Schendel, "Geographies of knowing, geographies of ignorance: Jumping scale in Southeast Asia," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, No. 20, 2001, pp. 647-668; James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2009.

zone where multiple systems of value, domination, and exchange met and overlapped. People as well as goods were bought and sold in these highlands, and Gros convincingly demonstrates the importance of slavery in the region's social history. The Drung were especially vulnerable to enslavement by more powerful groups because of their marginality. Yet rather than regarding the Dulong River valley as a margin of other, more important spaces, Gros suggests that we view it instead as a "corridor" where the frontiers of ethnicity, politics, culture, and exchange were continually reconfigured.

Chapter Five delves into the history of Drung women's facial tattoos. Here, Drung social history meets Chinese political history. Tattooing inscribed Drung women as nubile and reproduced the fertility of the group. Under Maoism, the practice was derided as a form of oppression, and it eventually ceased altogether. Yet it has become the emblematic image of the Drung in China.

Chapters Six and Seven examine Drung kinship terminology, marriage practices, and concepts of territorial belonging. Clan and territory create networks of alliance that are now shifting alongside Drung patterns of residence, partly in response to Chinese state policies. Chapter Eight analyses the social significance of Drung longhouses, which articulate notions of masculine and feminine complementarity. Finally, Chapter Nine examines the logic of social reproduction, centred on the circulation of substances, the importance of sharing, and the notion of a fundamental debt. The "missing share" of the book's title alludes to Drung myths in which people do not receive their fair share in ritual distributions of wealth or food and are therefore in a perpetual state of lack. In one such myth, the unequal distribution of goods disempowers the Drung people as a whole and renders them economically and politically weak.

Through the idea of the "missing share," Gros links the Drung system of value, with its emphasis on egalitarian distribution, to the position of the Drung in broader regional systems of exchange. The Drung believe power is always beyond their grasp. Once in a position of weakness vis-à-vis Tibetan and Naxi chiefs, they now see themselves as the weaker party in relation to the Chinese state. However, they have parlayed this position into new forms of exchange, becoming the recipients of long-term government aid.

The twentieth century was a time of swift and sometimes brutal social transformation for the Drung, as it was for the rest of China. In this context, *La Part manquante* accomplishes a delicate balancing act, furnishing the reader with rich ethnographic detail about the cultural history of the Drung without creating the illusion of an intact, unbroken tradition. The author's approach favours the agency of the Drung while showing that they define themselves through disempowerment. It is a valuable ethnographic and historical record of a people undergoing rapid change.

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