

between China's current anticorruption efforts and some previous notable attempts to curb corruption in the Tang, Ming and Qing dynasties, and by placing the corruption problem in the global context.

The book will be an essential source of reference for not only students of China studies, but also students of history and political science, and anyone else who is interested in using history as a tool to understand contemporary China.

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State Formation in China and Taiwan: Bureaucracy, Campaign and Performance

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Building upwards and outwards from the groundwork laid by her seminal 1998 *Strong Institutions in Weak Polities: State Building in Republican China, 1927–1940* (Oxford University Press), Julia Strauss revisits the literature on state formation and brings to it a new, dynamic and comparative historical focus. Strauss finds that although there is much to commend in the historical-institutional turn with respect to issues of temporal sequencing and critical junctures, and state interactions with core elites and forms of either delegated or deployed rule, relatively little has been said “about process, implementation, and the intelligibility of the state’s projects at the time they were undertaken” (p. 3). In this volume, she seeks to balance classical Weberian institutionalism with Gramscian cultural approaches, and move, as she puts it, “one level down” from the analysis of outcomes and structures to reprise the substantive and crucial details of precisely how two ideologically diametrically opposed regimes were formed on either side of the Taiwan Strait after 1949. The result is a provocative and often challenging comparative analysis of the making of two successful but widely divergent party-states by the Chinese Communist Party in post-liberation Sunan, and the Kuomintang in post-1949 Taiwan.

The core of the comparative analysis is broken into extended discussions of not only the bureaucratic modalities of state building in terms of constructing formal state institutions, but also the attempts of authorities to render those projects legible to wider public audiences. This involved, in both cases, the practice of carrying out mobilizational campaigns designed to focus and concentrate administrative and popular effort around targeted policy implementation. Strauss hones in on three paired case studies to illuminate how the performative, bureaucratic and campaign modalities she identifies were interwoven in the process of PRC and ROC state formation: the creation and training of a cadre of state administrative agents to staff the bureaucracies of their respective party-states, the project of weeding out presumptive internal enemies, and the implementation of ambitious land reform programmes. Her first chapter details how the ROC and PRC each faced the challenge of building a cadre of loyal and competent agents after 1949, by drawing upon similar repertoires that conflated expert knowledge, political loyalty and individuality in their recruitment and training practices. She finds that, critically, whereas the PRC leadership focussed their recruitment efforts on those who had demonstrated their loyalty to the Party and the revolutionary cause before 1949,

the Kuomintang aimed to develop “scientific” systems of modern management that recruited through open competitive examinations and a meritocratic system of career progression and rewards.

In chapters two and three, Strauss turns to how these agents waged campaigns of terror against perceived internal enemies as the two new party-states in Sunan and Taiwan began the relentless process of consolidating their power. She finds that, whereas the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries was launched in the PRC in part to overcome the laborious bureaucratic procedures involved in reviewing and investigating accusations against presumed enemies of the state, the ROC’s implementation of White Terror bore the hallmarks of “a legal bureaucratic modality that claimed to expand and regularize impartially applied rules and laws” even as it succumbed in practice to waves of moral panic about political subversion and was driven by an intensifying competition between rival security agencies within the state (p. 143).

The institutional and performative aspects of land reform in Sunan and Taiwan, which the author points out “stand as perhaps our most important and accessible test case for comparing ‘successful’ versions of revolutionary and reformist approaches to land reform” (p. 178), are covered in rich detail in chapters four and five. Strauss finds that land reform was not only crucial to establishing the legitimacy of the regimes on either side of the Taiwan Strait, but also spurred the PRC and ROC states to build up their presence in the countryside, granting both the ability to penetrate rural communities down to the social grassroots. This newfound institutional capacity allowed each the ability to fundamentally restructure the countryside, creating new organizations in rural areas that linked back to burgeoning party-state structures at superordinate levels. Yet equally important was the normative dramaturgy of land reform in each case, communicating the very different moral underpinnings between the PRC and ROCs to one another and to their respective populations. Both the revolutionary state-supported violence of the public accusation and class struggle sessions staged in Sunan, and the peaceful technocratic transfer of “excess land” in Taiwan generated powerful heuristics modelling how new state-enlightened subjects ought to behave in each regime. Despite the obvious differences, however, Strauss reminds us that the ways that these two very different land reform campaigns were used instrumentally by their respective regimes were identical: “to clear the countryside of all meaningful social organizations, institutions, and individuals who could act as a brake on the expansion of state power; to penetrate to the grass roots of rural society; and to fundamentally re-cast rural political and economic institutions in the dominant party-state’s preferred image” (p. 240).

The result is a robust and gripping analysis of the bureaucratic and narrative aspects of state formation. Some may question the viability of a research design that compares state building at a national level, which clearly takes place within the context of a broader set of international dynamics, to the same process of a sub-national/provincial unit. Anticipating this critique, Strauss points out that the fractal nature of state formation in the PRC meant that sub-national government units implemented the broad directives from above, but they did so in light of their local conditions, affording Sunan an unusual level of autonomy more roughly equivalent to the more independent Taiwan. She further notes that both regimes arrived as “external occupiers” with “weak and shallow social roots in the territories over which they exercised coercive control” (p. 12), creating an overall dynamic that was more similar than not. Both points are debatable, particularly in the context of the literature on state formation; but, regardless, Strauss has produced a richly detailed, provocative and compelling framework that breaks new

ground by interweaving a more traditional institutional analysis with careful attention to the culturalist and performative aspects of state power.

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On Shifting Foundations: State Rescaling, Policy Experimentation and Economic Restructuring in Post-1949 China

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How has the Chinese Party-state reconciled the competing goals of political stability and policy innovation and the conflicting priorities of central and subnational state actors? In *On Shifting Foundations*, Kean Fan Lim suggests that throughout both the Mao era and the post-Mao decades of reform the Party-state has managed these feats in large part by adopting spatially differentiated policies and successive waves of “state rescaling.” Building upon the work of geographers and urbanist theorists, Lim defines such rescaling as “the reconfiguration of regulatory relations between the national, subnational, and supranational governments” (p. 14). Lim contends that state rescaling, used strategically by both central and subnational governments, takes on distinctive importance in the PRC context. To develop new insights into these rescaling dynamics, the study explores in depth the political drivers and policy consequences of China’s recent efforts to create state-level New Areas – special territories of regulatory and developmental privilege – in different regional settings.

The book’s opening chapters provide a detailed review of previous literature on state rescaling and an overview of evolving state rescaling practices in China between 1949 and the present. Together, these chapters call attention to the fluid and continually contested ways that state power and policies operate in space. This discussion sets the stage for Lim’s conceptual framework in chapter three, which emphasizes the intentional and deeply politicized nature of state rescaling processes in the PRC context (as opposed to more market-led rescaling processes in the European context) and highlights key continuities as well as shifts between the Mao era and post-Mao era in the state’s use of uneven development strategies and territorial adjustments.

The book’s empirical heart, running from chapters four to seven, examines the political and economic dynamics around the creation and early development of state-level New Areas in Guangdong’s Pearl River Delta (PRD) region and in the province-level municipality of Chongqing. In both settings, the establishment around 2009–2010 of these special territorial entities was closely tied to the pursuit of large-scale economic restructuring and policy innovation. After discussing the varying development challenges and institutional constraints faced by an economic core region like the PRD and an inland metropolis like Chongqing in the early 21st century, Lim traces how central and subnational actors vied in each setting to influence the stated missions and practical workings of New Areas. Lim shows how, in the PRD region, the Hengqin and Qianhai New Areas became part of provincial Party secretary Wang Yang’s controversial quest to upgrade the industrial structure and clear out low-end manufacturing. In the analysis of Chongqing’s Liangjiang New