Finally, the landscape of private entrepreneurship is changing rapidly. Policy to create a "mixed" economy has meant that in many sectors the government has encouraged cross-investment between state and private firms. While SOEs may take only small stakes in private firms (and vice versa), it is plausible that control of business decisions in the private sector is now more infused with political agendas. The authors discuss the pros and cons, from the viewpoint of entrepreneurs, of having Party cells in private firms. Their findings can be updated with information on new types of financial stakes by SOEs, and whether and how such trends affect the identity and "strategic actions" of entrepreneurs. Elsewhere, I and co-authors Meg Rithmire and Kellee Tsai ("Party-state capitalism in China," *Current History*, 2021) have noted how these emerging features of China's political economy foster the blurring of lines between private entrepreneurs and the state. These features suggest possibly new constraints on deployment of "weapons of the rich."

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China's Contained Resource Curse: How Minerals Shape State–Capital–Labor Relations
JING VIVIAN ZHAN
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The diverse social impacts of natural resource extraction have long been a focus of economists and political scientists alike, with the former most interested in the conditions under which resources crowd out other industries and stifle development (the "Dutch disease"); the latter, in how resources prop up autocratic rule. Despite its complex history with the extractive sector – from struggles over foreign control of coal rights in Shandong and Shanxi in the early 20th-century to the discovery of oil in Daqing, Heilongjiang in 1959, to today's Belt and Road Initiative energy investments abroad – China has not been central to this research. Until recently. Historians like Shellen Xiao Wu and Victor Seow have begun tracing the role of carbon in the country's governance and international relations. And now, in her excellent new book *China's Contained Resource Curse: How Minerals Shape State–Capital–Labor Relations*, political scientist Jing Vivian Zhan has offered a nuanced analysis of how Beijing has largely avoided the potentially deleterious effects of mining and drilling at a national level, even as local communities in particularly resource-dependent areas of China have struggled.

As the volume's subtitle suggests, Zhan's argument incorporates multiple stakeholders. She posits that resource extraction generates considerable capital accumulation in the regions where it is carried out, not just in the extractives sector itself, but also in construction, manufacturing and real estate, albeit in a form that risks speculative bubbles. At the same time, because extraction is increasingly mechanized, it provides few job opportunities, even as it draws investment away from other, more labour-intensive and high-tech parts of the economy. Low employment, combined with extremely dangerous working conditions, undermines workers. Corruption is rampant, too, along with organized crime. Coal bosses, in particular – and the book mainly concerns coal, not oil – have captured the lowest rungs of the state.

More interestingly, Zhan provides evidence that grassroots authorities in resource-dependent areas spend less on "human capital-developing public goods including education and health services," owing again to the relatively small and unskilled workforce (in the conventional sense) needed in such places (p. 17). Yet, the same officials must appease angry workers and citizens with redistribution in the form of higher social-security expenditures, which are often funded by resource firms induced in different ways to contribute to their surrounding communities. This multifaceted argument, with different outcomes for different actors, is bolstered with interview-based fieldwork and subnational statistical analysis.

One of the book's greatest strengths is its interviews. Between 2010 and 2016, Zhan spoke with over a hundred Communist Party and government officials, mine managers and employees, and local citizens in "dozens of localities" in Shanxi, Jiangxi, Henan, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang (p. 23). In the appendix to her first chapter, she not only lists these interviews, but also provides sample questions from her semi-structured conversations. Some of Zhan's interlocutors are surprisingly frank. A Shanxi work safety official confides to her, for instance, "[b]ehind almost every fatal mining accident, there must be some officials who have taken bribes and neglected their official duties" (p. 123). Meanwhile, a mine manager says, "[i]f all the safety rules were strictly followed, it would be impossible for our mines to operate at all" (p. 81). Comments like these are skilfully interwoven with information from news articles and government reports.

There are other strengths, too. The statistics are uncluttered and convincing. They complement Zhan's qualitative nicely. And like her interview details, the full results of her tests are helpfully placed at the end of each chapter for those interested in digging deeper. The book is organized in a readable manner. Each chapter tackles a different aspect of Zhan's argument: first, minerals and economic development; then, resource extraction and labour abuses; next, mining and local state capture; and finally, public goods provision. Her conclusion thoughtfully reflects on Chinese strengths that militate against a full resource curse – not just the state's overall strong capacity, but also the weak representation of resource interests in the Politburo, China's move toward a more efficient "circular economy," and the country's decentralized governance – as well as the barriers that exist to a more balanced approach to resource management, such as weakly institutionalized bargaining between firms and officials.

One minor weakness stands out: although, as noted, Zhan's quantitative analysis is strong, it is stuck at the level of China's 31 provinces, directly administered cities and autonomous regions – a limitation she acknowledges early on in the book. Zhan renders these unwieldy units comparable by controlling for their prosperity, rural–urban balance, ethnic diversity and population density, as well as by using regional and year fixed effects (plus including measures of law enforcement capacity and bureaucratic size in some models). Her findings would shine through clearer if she could, say, compare different counties within Inner Mongolia. Moreover, there is a slight mismatch between the incentives and trade-offs that Zhan describes as operating primarily at the grassroots and the higher-level information she employs.

Of course, this is not just an issue for *China's Contained Resource Curse*. The quantitative portions of my own recent volume on Chinese worker unrest also focus on provinces, because official data on labour disputes and other variables of interest to me are not available below that level. Some dynamics, such as urbanization, may be documented quantitatively in creative ways, for instance via the measurement of night light, as in the work of Jeremy Wallace and others. However, there are only so many such workarounds available. Moreover, Zhan's (and my) means of compensating – intensive fieldwork – is difficult to conduct in China at present.

For all these reasons, a more thorough political-science treatment of the country's natural resource sector is unlikely to come along for a long time. Zhan's book will be a valuable addition to syllabi on Chinese politics and political economy more generally. And it ought to inform broader public debates about the forces that quite literally power China's rise.

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Searching for Sweetness: Women's Mobile Lives in China and Lesotho

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Over the past 15 years, Chinese migration to Africa has received sustained scholarly attention as an important dimension of China's growing engagement in the continent. Researchers have not only debunked various myths and rumours of Chinese state-sponsored mass-migration schemes and Chinese convict labourers in Africa, but also produced in-depth analyses of Chinese migrant groups' economic activities and their interactions and relations with Africans on the ground. However, it is still difficult to find studies that investigate the local Chinese contexts that have given rise to Chinese migration to Africa, or fine-grained ethnographies that document Chinese women's migration journeys and experiences in Africa. This gap in the literature is surprising because migrants from the same hometown tend to concentrate in specific sectors (for example, Shanglin people in small-scale gold mining in West Africa, and Fuqingese traders in the retail and wholesale business in southern Africa) and because Chinese migrants in Africa today, unlike their predecessors, are joined by an increasing number of women who travel to realize their own aspirations.

Sarah Hanisch's *Searching for Sweetness: Women's Mobile Lives in China and Lesotho* is a timely and welcome contribution to the study of contemporary Chinese migrants in Africa. The book is a multi-sited ethnography that traces the life journeys of ten Chinese women who strived to search for "sweetness" both in Fuqing and Lesotho. While most of these women had initially migrated domestically from their rural homes to Fuqing, a county-level city in Fujian province well known for its long history of outward migration and recent economic success, they represent three different cohorts of women migrants: "those born in the late Mao era, in the first reform decade, and in the second reform decade" (p. 4). Hanish's core contribution is twofold. First, she shows how China's domestic rural-to-urban migration and Chinese migration to Africa are interconnected. Second, she argues that the Chinese state's metanarratives of "development," "modernity" and "bitterness/sweetness" continue to provide the framework for ordinary people as they try to obtain "sweetness," which entails both material success and social status.

The chapters in the book are not organized chronologically but spatially. In chapters two and three, the author demonstrates how individual women's struggles were closely tied to the transformation of Fuqing in the post-reform era. Although the three cohorts of women were faced with distinct challenges, they all took up the state's metanarratives of *yiku sitian* (remembering bitterness, appreciating sweetness) and *fendou* (struggle) to motivate themselves in search of personal and family