

in the demarcation of local border areas as well as the creation not simply of new units (i.e. counties) but entire new administrative layers (i.e. sub-provincial level cities [*fusheng ji shi*]) over time and the consistent interventions by Beijing to cut back these numbers to keep them manageable.

This is an excellent study, thorough and granular while also macro in its scope and argumentation. The historical and largely descriptive analysis may not satisfy some mainstream political scientists, but, I suspect, they are not Chung's principal audience. Although some might find Chung's self-references in the endnotes to be a tad excessive, one can also argue that he has earned the right to do so, given the sheer quantity and quality of his publishing output over the years. Chung's extensive use of Chinese sources is to be emulated, and his critique of Western scholarship – "China's local administrative hierarchy and its historical evolution to date received relatively scant attention in the scholarly literature... [particularly] in Western academia" (p. 32) – is well taken, as far as it goes. But it is slightly undercut by the paucity of citations of work by younger scholars over the past 10 to 15 years with whom Chung might have otherwise engaged (most of the endnotes are from around the 1990s and early 2000s). Finally, given that this book is an opus not only of Chung's own scholarship but also of the study of centre–local relations in China over the past generation more generally, I would have much preferred footnotes to endnotes. But that is almost certainly an editorial decision by the press, not the author.

In sum, this is a book that should be used in upper-level undergraduate classes on Chinese politics. It should also be a key text for graduate courses covering Chinese centre–local relations as well as seminars that look at broader question of state capacity. And it should be on the desk of every China scholar.

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The Making of the Chinese Middle Class: Small Comfort and Great Expectations

JEAN-LOUIS ROCCA

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Anyone who has lived in China or even visited in the last five years cannot but be impressed by the prevalence of a public discourse of the middle class. Television runs the message endlessly of a middle-class lifestyle: cars, housing, restaurants, clothing, holidays and so on. And that's the programmes before even the advertisements are mentioned. A middle-class lifestyle is a cultured lifestyle and the height of achievement for all Chinese citizens in the 21st century. Newspapers and magazines similarly reinforce these messages, as do commercial, public service and political posters on the streets and in shopping malls. A favourite example is from the Post Office Savings Bank depicting a young couple with a young daughter saving for her music lessons (violin) and education, their car, house and exotic (palm tree) vacation. Over the last two decades, repeated surveys of the Chinese population have revealed that when asked explicitly whether they are middle class the vast majority of respondents have demurred. Yet when asked to self-identify their class the vast majority (by

roughly the same margins of two-thirds to three quarters) have said that they were indeed middle class.

Jean-Louis Rocca's *The Making of the Chinese Middle Class* is precisely about explaining the causes and consequences of that paradox and those phenomena. Its focus, as the title suggests, is the social construction of the Chinese middle class. The emphasis is the process: how the socio-economic conditions engendered a bigger and somewhat different middle class than existed under state socialism; how the middle class was and is conceived in China as a result of the socio-economic changes of the last 40 years; how the development of a middle-class lifestyle helps in the shaping of middle class consciousness; and what middle class politics in China looks like. The book is also a major contribution to the literature not only on the middle-class phenomenon in China, but also on the industrialized and industrializing world's understandings of class more generally. It will be useful reading for students on courses in China studies, sociology and politics, and should be mandatory for any researcher interested in social change in China, not only for its analysis and findings, but also for the richness of its source material and the sophistication of its methodology.

Rocca starts with a discussion of class and the understanding of the middle class, highlighting his social constructivist approach to class formation. Drawing on the twin traditions of E. P. Thompson (in England) and Luc Boltanski (in France), Rocca argues that the middle class "is less a specific group of people than a way of thinking and foreseeing the structures of Chinese society, a part of the new social imaginary China is elaborating" (p. 11). Classes make themselves through their actions, belief systems and development of lifestyles, and particularly through the distinctions that they and others make about themselves.

The book then proceeds to date the beginning of the emergence of the (new) middle class in China to the decision to relaunch economic reforms during the early 1990s. It was this decision that led to the emergence of a consumer society driven by new categories of people with real disposable income. Rocca analyses the consequences of these developments including the increase in income inequality and the change in the role of education as a consumer product. This second chapter ends with a survey of the social background of students at Tsinghua University, in Beijing, where Rocca taught for six years.

The third chapter provides an extremely detailed and useful guide to the conceptualization of the middle class within China itself. The middle class became a focus for Chinese academics and even some public intellectuals after Jiang Zemin's valedictory speech at the 2002 Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Jiang called for a widening of the middle stratum, largely in order to reinforce social stability. Within a relative short period, the middle class became the key not only to stability but also to continued economic growth, and to the attainment of a civilized society.

Rocca's attention then turns to the lifestyle that is the essence of all this much deserved and much-needed middle-classness. A specific standard of living that includes home ownership and consumption is necessarily part of this lifestyle. But so too is the struggle for social mobility and betterment, often in contradistinction to other social classes. Once again, education is a key to understanding middle-class values and behaviour, as are housing and occupation. As one interviewee reported on the question of civilized behaviour, "the value of a flat depends on the quality of the people living in it" (p. 157).

Finally, the book ends with a consideration of middle-class politics in China. Here the analysis is less definite, but not without justice. Rocca had started the whole book with an ironic parody of Marx and Engels: "A spectre haunts China: the middle class." While others have seen the middle class (in China as elsewhere) as the likely

generator of liberal democracy, Rocca takes a different tack. He sees the creative tension between the Chinese Communist Party's drive for legitimacy through improved economic performance (and a rising standard of living) and the middle class's rights mobilization, usually in their own economic interests. Where that interaction will result is clearly unknown. The Party may hope that the emergence of a majority middle class and middle class-identifying population will bring a political and social stability that reinforces the position of the elite. As Rocca emphasizes, the creation of the middle class is not just an inherently contradictory process but it is also inherently risky. Economic growth can never be guaranteed and middle-class mobilization may eventually move in unexpected directions.

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The Economics of Air Pollution in China: Achieving Better and Cleaner Growth

MA JUN

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ix + 300 pp. \$65.00; £48.00

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This book is an impressive collection of data about the economic dimension of environmental pollution in the People's Republic of China. It establishes, in an unprecedented way, links between activities in the energy, industry and transportation sectors and the extent of particulate air pollution (measured as PM_{2.5}) in China, while offering recommendations on how to drastically reduce it. The main author, Ma Jun (chief strategist at the research bureau of the People's Bank of China) and a handful of colleagues, who contributed data and analyses for individual chapters, develop multi-faceted models that illustrate possible pathways toward the country's greener and cleaner future. The book was produced with support from the Paulson Institute (Chicago) and is a translation and selection of chapters from a book originally published in Chinese in 2014.

The book is divided into two larger parts. The first contains five chapters, starting with an analysis of the main sources of air pollution in China. The authors then describe the measures, mainly in the form of policies enacted by the central government, that have already been taken to reduce PM_{2.5} levels, such as pollution monitoring, industrial upgrading, traffic regulation and the expansion of public transport, etc. Since, according to the authors' calculations, the chosen instruments will not suffice to achieve the formulated goal of reducing average annual PM_{2.5} levels by almost half (namely, from 65 µg/m³ to 35 µg/m³) by 2030, the authors come to suggest further actions aiming at structural adjustments in different economic sectors in order to tackle air pollution. In addition, they present possible economic incentives for these structural adjustments and conclude that complying with these measures which aim at pollution reduction does not necessarily need to hamper economic growth. The second part of the book continues to model pollution reduction strategies in four chapters, but now for specific localities (Shanghai, Beijing), in specific fields (coal use) and by certain means (green finance).

Ma Jun's analyses are unique and valuable since they represent an incredibly comprehensive and systematic econometric approach to the problem of air pollution in China. The book contains an enormous amount of data, mostly stemming from