

facilitated a new interest in Confucianism as, in the words of one informant connected with People's University (*Renda*) in Beijing, “not only the object of academic research but also of research on the Way and the destiny of Man (*rendao de yanjiu*)” (p. 38). Through Confucian-themed *guoxueban* (“national study classes”) offered to business managers and government workers by Chinese universities, all kinds of people – including entrepreneurial young women – enter into “master–disciple” relationships (the traditional dyad through which Confucian traditions are transmitted) and thus both perpetuate and invigorate Confucian traditions. Similarly, *anshen liming* – or finding in Confucianism one's personal meaning and purpose – becomes a distinctively Chinese way to reject both Western and Maoist values. Ironically, perhaps, advocates of Confucianism as *anshen liming* see it transcending its Chinese origins and its ideological character: “There are no racial or religious limits to Confucianism: It can solve the world's problems!” (p. 113). Yet most of those interviewed by the authors seem to have discovered *anshen liming* through specifically Chinese master–disciple relationships, including connections with religiously minded entrepreneurs from Taiwan and Hong Kong, as well as mainland activists who seek to enshrine Confucianism as a sixth officially recognized religion (*zongjiao*) alongside Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, and Protestant and Roman Catholic Christianity. Finally, the deliberate revival and transformation of Confucian ritual practices (*lijiao*) – such as the commemoration of Confucius's birthday in his home city of Qufu – provides concrete, material expressions of the spiritual quests embodied in *jiaohua* and *anshen liming*.

All three arenas of “Confucian revival” have generated successful instances of what the authors call the “double dream of popular Confucianism: continuity and autonomy” (p. 289). Through institutional self-improvement schemes, personal spiritual discovery and local community-building, pre-modern, rural, elite Confucian traditions have been appropriated by post-modern, urban, popular sectors of contemporary Chinese society. So what does this alleged “revival” tell us about contemporary China? Among other things, it would seem to herald the Confucianization of China's middle class – now the world's largest – in ways that suggest that revived, reimagined rural roots and traditional culture can be used both to undermine and to reinforce state control. Whether the cultural-historical snapshot of early 21st-century China captured by this volume will be an enduring portrait remains to be seen, of course. But its authors have provided us with a compelling and complex narrative of what it means to be Confucian in contemporary China, which makes their work an indispensable resource for all in Chinese studies.

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Training the Party: Party Adaptation and Elite Training in Reform-era China

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The core message of this book is that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been able to withstand the test of economic and social transformation. Lee sets out to investigate why this is the case by focusing on the role of the Party school system



in elite training in China. There are 2,753 Party schools at central, provincial and local levels in China. The most important is the Central Party School in Beijing, which trains leading Party officials at county level and above.

Chapter one, the introduction, argues that the CCP has maintained its survival through present reforms by remaining their central architect. Therefore an institution-driven view of regime durability in China must take centre stage. The Party school institution is crucial in this regard, as it ensures Party management of the state bureaucracy. Chapter two describes the organizational landscape and provides an overview of the Party school system, its history and organizational context. Chapter three investigates the relationship between cadre training in the Party schools and elite selection, arguing that Party school training places cadres on a fast track to promotion. Chapter four addresses the fact that Party schools no longer enjoy a monopoly on the training of government and Party leaders. They now face competition from several training academies such as China Executive Leadership Academy Pudong (CELAP) and similar academies in Yan'an and Jinggangshan. These leadership academies have been set up by the Central Organizational Department and in fact belong to a different system (*xitong*) than the Party schools. In recent years the Party has also trained select groups of leading cadres in overseas training programmes at Harvard and Cambridge University as well as the Copenhagen Business School. Chapter five advances the notion of the “entrepreneurial Party school” in order to illustrate how the Party school system has adapted to market reform by expanding the repertoire of the schools’ activities. This chapter also includes a comparison with the media. The media are controlled by the central propaganda department and its propaganda and ideology system, which is outside the Party school system. It is not clear why the author has chosen to include this comparison. Chapter six presents a content analysis of syllabi from Party schools and shows how the Party schools have been able to keep pace with the times by allocating more time to training in management and leadership skills. Chapter seven, the conclusion, stresses the Party schools’ role in political personnel management. It also argues that the “CCP’s resilience is a consequence of deliberate organizational proliferation” (p. 199). This point is debatable, indicating a certain fragmentation or pluralization in CCP management of the cadre corps.

The book supplements earlier works by Frank Pieke (*The Good Communist: Elite Training and State Building in Today’s China*, Cambridge University Press, 2009), David Shambaugh (“Training China’s Political Elite: The Party School System,” *The China Quarterly* 196, 2008, pp. 827–44), and Ignatius Wibowo and Lye Liang Fook (“China’s Central Party School: A Unique Institution Adapting to Changes,” in Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Zheng Yongnian [eds.], *The Chinese Communist Party in Reform*, London: Routledge, 2006, pp. 139–56). In particular the first three chapters of the book provide new important insight. However, there are also a number of questionable statements and conclusions. For example, the author mentions that there are 25 ranks in the People’s Republic of China. In fact there are 27 ranks, ranging from state leader to office worker (p. 8). The author also claims that a cadre is anyone “eating imperial grain.” However, about 66 million people in China “eat imperial grain” (are on state salary), but there are only 46 million cadres. Moreover, Lee has a table where the source for the number of 46 million cadres is listed as COD 1999 (p. 9). But according to this source the number of cadres is only 40.5 million. So where does the number of 46 million come from? I would also argue that to indicate that 500,576 leading cadres is only a “slightly larger” number than the cadres whose appointment is managed by the Central Committee (p. 8) is

rather problematic given the fact that there are maximum 4,000 positions on the Central Committee's nomenklatura list.

On page 76, bottom, Lee argues that a “low or unranked official with a university degree might not expect higher chances of promotion, but a degree appears to have a strong effect on those in consideration for a leading cadre position” (p. 76). First of all, officials in China are all ranked and there is no such thing as an unranked official. Secondly, there is no doubt that a section member (*keyuan*) will stand a better chance of advancing to a section head position if s/he holds a university degree. Section head is not considered a leading cadre position. I would actually also disagree with Lee in defining leading cadres as cadres with the rank of vice-division leader (*fuchu ji*) and up. I am not sure *chuji yishang* (division level and up), which is the official definition of leading cadres, also includes the *fuchu ji* level. These are all minor details, although I would argue that they are not considered trivial by Chinese Party officials. At a more general level, I would disagree with the assertion that “that the CCP's resilience is a consequence of deliberate organizational proliferation, in certain realms, rather than center-led consolidation” (p. 199). In my view the CCP's resilience is not coincidental or the consequence of pluralization, it is rather the result of deliberate policies focusing on creating a younger and better educated cadre corps. These policies were all discussed, formulated and implemented by the Party centre in Beijing.

For anyone interested in how the CCP has evolved into a resilient organization constituting the core of the system's durability, this study is highly recommendable. It is also a useful supplement to other studies on the Party school system.

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Varieties of Governance in China: Migration and Institutional Change in Chinese Villages

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While political scientists have written much about village governance and the significance of election reforms in rural China, economists and sociologists have evaluated how rural to urban migration influences those “left behind” in villages such the elderly and children. However, few scholars closely examine how village out-migration directly influences local governance. Jie Lu provides a well-written and comprehensive study on the various types of rural governance and how social conditions, such as migration, shape village institutions and the provision of public services. Drawing on two national surveys, several village case studies and many individual interviews, Lu demonstrates that both indigenous relations-based institutions and formal rule-based institutions can provide good governance, but the effectiveness of these institutions depends on the changing social conditions of villages (i.e. level of out-migration).

The main argument is that good governance is not solely based on the type of governing institutions (formal or informal), but rather on the social conditions in which these institutions operate. Lu starts with the decentralization of rural administration and greater economic opportunities in the cities that have increased rural out-