

role that he occupies in Ming China's history vis-à-vis the northern frontier, Qiu and his text are only afforded cursory mentioning in *More Than the Great Wall* (c.f. p. 285). Although many of Qiu's policy proposals were not implemented (actual "action" is very much the focus of Dardess), this does not minimize the merits in studying him and his work: the acute sense of defensive urgency felt by Ming officialdom in the post-Tumu era; how Ming border defenses were understood to be in need of reworking; and the ways in which Mongols and northern steppe peoples figured into the maneuvers of mid-Ming politics could have been elucidated by an examination of Qiu Jun's *Daxue yanyi bu*.

In a word, *More Than the Great Wall* is an invaluable contribution to the fields of Ming political, military, and borderland history. It is a compelling and intimate chronology of how the Ming succeeded, managed, and failed in northern border defense, and illustrates how "for 276 years, despite many serious lapses and horrendous breakdowns, the system worked" (p. 2). Surely, students and researchers alike stand to benefit from the carefully crafted scholarship offered in this volume.

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China goes green: coercive environmentalism for a troubled planet

By Yifei Li and Judith Shapiro. Polity Press, 2020. 245 pages. Hardback, £50.00, ISBN: 978-1-509-54311-3. Paperback, £15.99, ISBN: 978-1-509-54312-0. Ebook, £11.99, ISBN: 978-1-509-54313-7.

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The rapid achievement of China's recent environmental regulation in tackling frequent occurrences of heavy smog and unsightly river scenes in cities is remarkable, even under the persistent pressure of continuous economic development. Likewise, it seems that China has succeeded in keeping cases of the novel coronavirus cases very low after a strict lockdown of Wuhan, where there was a striking increase of patients and deaths at the initial stage of the pandemic, while many Western developed countries are still enduring hardship in handling the unfamiliar infectious disease. This book is timely in providing insights into how China, as one of the longest-lasting authoritarian nations in the world, can govern such ecological crises in and beyond the country and questioning whether an authoritarian

approach to environmental governance can be justified either locally or globally in the age of Anthropocene, when the footprints of our species define the terms of the geological epoch.

The book's authorship combines an early-career native assistant professor in China and a well-established professor in the United States. The result is a deep exploration of the environmental governance system under China's characteristic authoritarian regime. In this book, the authors intend to integrate their observations and insights about the recent trend with its historical roots in China's state-led environmental governance, examining its processes, environmental outcomes, and non-environmental consequences such as the negative impact on individual freedoms, by probing a wide range of cases including domestic (pollution control, waste recycling, afforestation, hydropower construction, national park building); international (the Belt and Road Initiative); global (its plastic import ban, rare earth trade restriction, endangered species trade regulation); and planetary (geo- and astro-engineering) aspects. By reflecting on various cases at different scales, the authors reveal the Chinese characteristics of environmentalism typified by the recent official discursive philosophy "ecological civilization." They question whether and how "China goes green," home and abroad.

Li and Shapiro introduce the key concept of "authoritarian environmentalism" ("eco-authoritarianism," "coercive environmentalism," and "state-led environmentalism" are also used interchangeably), which is a hot topic in environmental governance literature, to disentangle a complex amalgamation of authoritarianism and environmentalism in China's environmental politics. They point out that authoritarian environmentalism has attracted scholarly attention since most endeavors toward participatory and cooperative environmental governance seem to have proven less promising means to address the urgency of ecological crises such as climate change and loss of biodiversity. Scholars of authoritarian environmentalism "have turned their focus to China to flesh out the implications of managing the environment through authoritarian means" (p. 16).

The authors conceptualize state-led environmentalism along three dimensions: "through top-down governmental tools, techniques, and technologies," "incorporating non-state environmental interests" into the state-led initiatives, and "non-environmental spillover effects," mainly observed "on the centralization of political power and the suppression of individual rights and public participation" (p. 20). Drawing on selected cases, they argue that China's engagement with environmental policy should be seen not as authoritarian environmentalism but as "environmental authoritarianism," whereby "authoritarianism is the end and environmentalism is the means" (p. 24).

This statement is thought-provoking. However, it might not capture precisely the complex dynamics in China's environmental governance. For example, as depicted in Chapter 1, one local government was compelled to follow a central mandate to replace coal with natural gas even when it was not ready; and some residents in North China had to bear the cold winters without alternative heating under the coal ban. This is a case of "systemic over-compliance on the part of local authorities" (p. 62), as the authors pointed out. However, it does not necessarily indicate that "authoritarianism is the end and environmentalism is the means." An alternative view might suggest that "authoritarian means distort the environmental end," and we may also acknowledge this case as one of the "non-environmental spillover effects" by environmental regulation. For some of the international and global cases described in this book, it is far more clear that "environmental authoritarianism" appears with a "green justification" (p. 96) veiling an unspoken motive. Examples include the "win-win green development" (p. 123) in the Belt and Road Initiative; and rare earth export restrictions in response to the "unfriendly" measure by the Japanese government in the East China Sea. It seems that environmentalism remains at the level of discursive rhetoric for these cases. So, we may say, "authoritarianism is the end, and environmentalism is the excuse" in these cases.

In addition to this point, we can find complexity in the relations between authoritarianism and environmentalism in "the primary governmental tools employed in the name of protecting, improving, or rehabilitating the environment." They include "pollution crackdowns, centrally administered campaign-style inspections, target-setting, behavior modification, forcible relocations, big data monitoring, manipulating global trade, and geoengineering" (p. 20). Among these tools, the crackdowns, inspections, and forcible relocations can easily be identified as coercive measures. However, other devices cannot. Target-setting is not a compulsory measure *per se* and are, for example, included in

the climate goals of the Paris Agreement and SDG goals endorsed by the United Nations. Behavior modification can be implemented to encourage voluntary actions such as municipal waste recycling applied in Japanese cities. Big data monitoring can also be used with deliberate and transparent rules as applied in the EU generally. Also, manipulation of global trade is undertaken by many countries not usually considered coercive. Furthermore, geoengineering could be in danger of utilizing a technopolitical tool to suppress some or many individual freedoms not only in China but also in other countries. The problem of Chinese environmental authoritarianism cannot be blamed on its tools only. Rather, the problem is that environmental authoritarianism may utilize not only direct coercive tools but also seemingly not coercive tools to accomplish both environmental and authoritarian ends in certain contexts. So, we may ask how and when such non-coercive tools can be applied for authoritarian means, rather than environmental means. This calls for further research into the complexity and contextuality of environmental governance.

The authors also point out that the coercive state-led environmentalism could not succeed without consensus based on consultation among a broad range of stakeholders, including the local community, NGOs, private companies, and scientists, as seen in the case of the ecological rehabilitation of the Loess Plateau in the late 1990s through early 2000s (but its subsequent scaling up efforts came to failure); and the case of the waste import ban in 2018. It is important to examine what kinds of factors we should consider when evaluating the success of any given case under the Chinese environmental authoritarianism. Furthermore, we may pay more attention to the possibility of “non-authoritarian spillover,” on which the authors have not focused in this book. This provides another focus for further research when we can find more successful cases in terms of multistakeholder consultation under the Chinese characteristic of authoritarian environmentalism. For example, according to my observation of environmental public interest litigation brought under the revised Environmental Protection Law in 2015, local environmental NGOs have come to collaborate with larger influential NGOs to collect evidence on site. Moreover, such evidence-gathering activities are supported by the eyes and the smartphones of nameless individual volunteers. This book shows that coercive state-led environmental governance has been dominant so far, and that non-environmental spillover effects cast a dark shadow over the future. However, we may find alternative ways to work toward environmentalism through careful and persistent observation, especially since “China’s state-society relations are in flux” (p. 18).

In sum, this book inspires us to rethink the complex visions of the future of China and the globe, which should be further examined under its unique amalgamation of authoritarianism and environmentalism.

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The Coolie’s Great War: Indian Labour in a Global Conflict, 1914–1921

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The Coolie’s Great War is a richly textured, many-layered, and carefully nuanced account of the half million plus labourers raised in India and deployed to support British operations in Europe, Africa,