

number of tobacco industrial enterprises declined from 120 in 2003 to 30 in 2008 (p. 108). Local STMAs were reorganized into a “vertical bureaucracy” that would act like corporate entities to promote domestic tobacco firms in global markets. Critically, Wang argues that this conglomeration was a result of the central government’s desire to create national champion firms. The merger movement and “recentralization” of control was not at all renationalization or a reversal of the CCP’s earlier liberalization policies, but rather the central government picking logical winners out of fragmented local tobacco markets and favoring them globally – a “deeper” economic decentralization” (p. 119).

The major theoretical framework as presented in the second chapter is “market-building as state-building,” drawing on a sociology literature that envisions states and markets as mutually constitutive. The emphasis on state-building unfortunately neglects power relations *between* levels of the state. For example, when local “winners” become national champions, do local governments resist centralization of control or do they benefit? Conversely, how was the central government so easily able to dissolve the local STMA bureaus when they had served local interests for two decades? The book would also benefit from serious consideration of alternative hypotheses. For example, Wang asserts that the central government enforced mergers to foster global competitiveness, but the evidence presented is also consistent with the logic of forcing winners to absorb losers rather than letting them fail.

Nevertheless, the methodological approach has much to recommend it. Wang’s most important achievement, in addition to producing an informative monograph on an understudied but critical industry, is providing an excellent example of the benefits of combining subnational and multilevel analysis. By examining local state competition and how local state management interacts with central goals over different periods, Wang departs from a static analysis of either local states or central policy to present a dynamic portrait of CCP industrial policy at the macro level. The result is a nicely argued study that challenges simple characterizations of the nature of state ownership in the Chinese economy and will appeal to those interested in industrial policy, state–market relations, and general political economy of reform in China.

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*Technomobility in China: Young Migrant Women and Mobile Phones*

CARA WALLIS

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China has become the world’s largest market of mobile phones within a short period. The fast diffusion of mobile phones in China, paralleling China’s dramatic social transformations, has created new but significant inquiries into the relationship between media use and social changes. Cara Wallis’s book, *Technomobility in China: Young Migrant Women and Mobile Phones*, represents an important and timely contribution to the growing literature on social implications of digital media uses in general and mobile phone use in China in particular.

As a feminist ethnographer, Wallis focuses on mobile communication among a group of marginalized women in urban China: young migrant women from rural areas working in low-level service sectors in Beijing. Using rich data obtained through

over ten months of participant observation in China and about 100 qualitative interviews with migrant workers, Wallis shows a vivid picture of how mobile phone use shapes and transforms young migrant women's work, lives, romantic relationships and subjectivity on the one hand, and how it is reconstructed by migrant women through their agency and daily practices on the other. Her book is an impressive extension of our understanding of "the mutually constitutive nature" of socio-cultural changes and technological changes in contemporary societies (p. 6).

In *Technomobility in China*, Wallis embeds her discussion of young migrant women's mobile phone use in an intersectional context of mass internal migration, rapid penetration of communication technology, increasing economic inequality and dramatic socio-cultural transformations in contemporary China. She defines the uniqueness of migrant women's mobile phone use as "necessary convergence," the "converging of multiple usages on a single device" because of users' "constrained economic resources and limited access to new media technologies" (pp. 8, 182), and differentiates it from privileged users' "selective convergence," converging functions on one device "for the sake of convenience" (p. 7). For the majority of young migrant women, the mobile phone is their first big urban purchase after arriving in cities. When educated, urban youth enjoy various options among myriad digital devices, young migrant women have to rely on a mobile phone to experience advanced digital media, achieve urban modernity, and reproduce their "gender-, class-, age-, and place-based identities" in cities (p. 4). This digital divide, to some extent, reflects profound economic inequality, status differentiation and social polarization in contemporary China.

Wallis believes that the mobile phone is a both empowering and disciplining technology for young migrant women. As an economically and socially marginalized group in urban cities, young migrant women face various constraints derived from the *hukou* system, capitalism exploitation, patriarchy and a hegemonic discourse of "*suzhi*" (quality) promoted by the Chinese government. Yet, with a mobile phone, migrant women can overcome these constraints by creating an immobile mobility, "a socio-techno means of surpassing spatial, temporary, physical, and structural boundaries" (p. 6). The convenient and instantaneous communication brought by mobile phone use enables migrant women to overcome the spatial and temporal barriers, caused by their long working hours and limited spatial movements in urban cities, and maintain and even enrich their social networks. Young girls creatively use mobile communication to forge romantic relationships from a distance. This, to some extent, challenges and transforms traditional mating practices and norms in rural China. Camera phones allow migrant women to imagine and represent a world beyond their spatial and economic constraints through taking and storing pictures. Furthermore, mobile phone use becomes a way for migrant women to individually resist employers.

While empowering migrant women, mobile phone use also entraps them into new constraints. The necessary convergence and their lack of literacy and skills in texting messages strengthen their marginalized status in urban cities. Their efforts in constructing a modern, urban female subjectivity through mobile communication reflect their internalization of the discourse of *suzhi* and the dominant power of modern essentialized femininity. Although mobile phone use helps migrant women to get job-related information, it seldom improves their economic status or assists them in achieving upward social mobility. Mobile phones also become a surveillance tool for employers to track, locate and control migrant women in both working and non-working hours.

Through discussing the liberating and constraining socio-techno practices of migrant women in China, Wallis provides an in-depth, convincing analysis of "how

marginalized groups engage with new media technologies amid myriad constraints” and the paradoxical interaction among technology, power, and subjectivity (p. 8). This book will definitely appeal to readers who have an interest in migration, gender and social media. It will also be highly recommended reading for scholars interested in contemporary China.

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*Lijiang Stories: Shamans, Taxi Drivers, and Runaway Brides in Reform-Era China*

EMILY CHAO

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*Lijiang Stories* is much more than a set of stories. It is a careful exegesis of the many strands that, woven together, have become today’s Lijiang. The strengths of this work are twofold: author Emily Chao paints a complex portrait of a region that refuses to objectify “Naxi” or naturalize the category, and she draws on extensive and intensive engagement with three areas of Lijiang through fieldwork that began in the early 1990s and continued through 2011.

With this temporal and geographic depth, Chao – unlike many other researchers of Lijiang (located in southwest China’s Yunnan Province) – does not assume that *dongba* culture is something primordial, nor does she accept it as the most appropriate distillation of Naxi culture. Chao refrains from uncritically reproducing tourist-guide propaganda about Naxi love suicides and ritual. Instead, she thoroughly explores the production of discourses surrounding these practices, drawing on deep relationships with townspeople, basin villagers, and residents of a mountain village – people whom she has known, in many cases, for nearly two decades – and on a sophisticated critical framework that leans heavily on Foucauldian biopolitics. This strategy allows her to trace how the stories that circulate widely in a city visited by nearly 12 million tourists in 2011 were created and to explore alternate narratives.

Thus we read how the *dongba* ritual specialists who survived the Cultural Revolution were called together by the county government for a meeting in 1981 and told that “*dongba* are good ... *sanba* are bad” (p. 60), a decision Chao links to the feminization of *sanba*, whose rituals and performances proved more difficult to contain within categories of accepted state practice. Henceforth, *dongba* were elevated as high-status arbiters of culture in the post-Mao era, while *sanba* ritual specialists – historically both men and women served in these roles – were further marginalized.

Chao’s study, rather than tracing the creation of the group “Naxi” (today one of China’s 56 officially designated ethnic groups), tracks the experiences of people who have found their lives disrupted and transformed through what Shao-hua Liu has called “bipolar” policies of the state since it incorporated south-west Chinese communities into its governing sphere – first through Mao-era campaigns and collective economies, then through widening inequality in the post-Mao era (*Passage to Manhood: Youth Migration, Heroin and AIDS in Southwest China*, Stanford University Press, 2010, p. 13). Chao also points out that local resistance to state policies began early, when young men would cut off a finger to avoid conscription by the Nationalist army before the Communists took control (p. 30).