Cultural Revolution on the ground and more exploration of Schoenhals's astonishing sources. The coverage of the last six years is thinner than of the opening years. However, enough is here to paint the structure to which further studies can refer. In the meantime, by telling the story much as it was MacFarquhar and Schoenhals contribute to the necessary basis for truth and reconciliation among the living; indeed, they dedicate the book to "future generations of Chinese historians" for whom this will be the task. As for Mao, there is poetic justice: in the reform and opening of the past twenty years "Mao's worst revisionist nightmare has been realized, with only himself to blame" (p. 459).

TIMOTHY CHEEK

*The Chinese Cultural Revolution as History.*
EDITED BY JOSEPH W. ESHERICK, PAUL G. PICKOWICZ AND ANDREW G. WALDER
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Every chapter in this edited volume makes for compelling reading and should command attention for anyone interested in the Cultural Revolution. The material presented is part of the new wave of scholarship on the period, discussed by the editors in the Introduction, that draws on recently available sources, including organizational histories, local gazetteers, biographies and memoirs, and a much richer pool of interviewees. All of the contributors are graduate students or junior faculty in history or sociology (with one in comparative literature), and the mentor-editors of this volume deserve credit for bringing this important work to publication at an early stage of their students' careers.

Although each essay tells an illuminating "story" about the Cultural Revolution, several themes run through the book, including the view that the Cultural Revolution was not just a decade of chaos and random violence, but also a product of agency and choice by participants, whether in compliance or resistance to the movement. Furthermore, the authors mostly focus on how ordinary people and off-centre locales became engulfed in the movement; nevertheless, the interplay of national-level elite politics and grassroots social and political forces is a key part of the volume's framework. Finally, because many of the essays draw on interviews with activists, victims and witnesses conducted some 30 years after the fact, they not only reflect the (dis)advantages of hindsight, but also provide us with a sobering update on the depth of the destruction and the lingering shadow of the Cultural Revolution in contemporary China.

The first essay, by Xiaowei Zheng, analyses the motivations of student activists at Qinghua University during the first stages of the Cultural Revolution. The author interviewed 13 Qinghua students of the era, including Kuai Dafu, who rose to be a national Red Guard "superstar" and a favourite of Jiang Qing and her radical allies and then fell from grace (along with the Red Guards as a whole) when Mao decided to curtail the violence. Zheng believes that Qinghua's Red Guards largely made decisions about the level of their involvement, factional affiliation and perseverance, based on deeply held "passions and political convictions" about the goals of the Cultural Revolution, not according to self-interest or their "good" working class or "bad" cadre origins, as is commonly argued.

Dahpon David Ho looks at *resistance* to the 1966 Cultural Revolution campaign to "Destroy the Four Olds" as it played out in Qufu, Shandong province, the

birthplace of Confucius, and thus an obvious target for zealous cultural revolutionaries. The author demonstrates how Qufu's own Red Guards by-passed the town's Confucian temples, workers defended the "Confucius Mansion" from attack, and city officials camouflaged threatened sites with red paint and pasted Mao quotes. Such counter-campaign actions, Ho believes, reveal "a deeper story of protection and resistance" (p. 66) in which local pride trumped "the fires of iconoclasm" (p. 93) ignited by the Cultural Revolution. The considerable destruction that was eventually visited upon some Confucian sites, including the Kung family graves, was largely the work of outside radicals.

Perhaps the most disturbing revelations about the period are contained in the chapter, "Mass killing in the cultural revolution: a study of three provinces," by Yang Su. Yang claims "the evidence is overwhelming" (p. 96) that politically induced atrocities were widespread at the commune (township) and brigade (village) levels from late 1967 through 1969 in Guangxi and Guangdong, less so in Hubei, where the pattern seems to have been large-scale mass beatings that stopped short of causing death. His essay analyses the type, scale, timing, location, victims, perpetrators and provincial variations of the mass killings, as well as the national and local political contexts that enabled them to take place, largely without restraint or retribution.

Jiangsui He shifts the spotlight from mass killings to the murder of one individual, Ma Zhongtai, a former landlord, in his native Shaanxi village of Yangjiagou during the Cultural Revolution. Before Liberation, the Ma family had "decent relationships" with their tenants and servants and Yangjiagou was a "relatively harmonious" (p. 149) and "cooperative" community (p 150). Despite an absence from the village of more than two decades after land reform, Ma Zhongtai and his wife were summoned back to become struggle targets in January 1969: he died of injuries incurred from severe beatings; she committed suicide a few days later. The author casts the Mas' tragic story as a confrontation between "customary morality" and "communist morality" that can "serve as a window on the moral suffering of peasants in socialist China" (p. 125). Based on visits and interviews in the late 1990s, He concludes that "Yangjiagou as a community has been destroyed by the struggles of the communist period" (p. 149).

The north China village of Xiaojinzhuang, which was touted as a national model by Jiang Qing in 1974–76 for its achievements in promoting revolutionary arts and culture, is the subject of the chapter by Jeremy Brown. The author describes how the village was subjected to an "urban invasion" by self-serving city officials who turned it into a "cultural theme park" (p. 154). where peasants were handed politically-correct scripts to perform for the tens of thousands of visitors it hosted in it heyday. According to Brown, both the rise and fall of the Xiaojinzhuang model (and the current "lackluster" condition of the village (p. 184) is symptomatic of the deep-seeded anti-rural bias of China's leaders.

Sigrid Schmalzer's essay, "'Labor created humanity': cultural revolution science on its own terms," presents a more positive assessment of the objectives and impact of the movement in at least one policy area than do the other chapters in this volume. Schmalzer "takes seriously the stated goals and methods of Cultural Revolution-era 'mass science'" (p. 185) in her study of developments in paleoanthropology (the study of human origins) during the late Cultural Revolution (1972–76). She concludes that even though this was a time when China came closest to "a productive union" between "top-down" and "bottom-up" (p. 208) models of scientific development, in the end, "the notion that the masses were 'superstitious' outweighed any idea that they have had special access to knowledge" (p. 210).

In April 1973, Chairman Mao sent a personal response – and 300 *yuan* "out of his own pocket" – to Li Qinglin, a Fujian school teacher who had written to Mao about

the abysmal conditions his sent-down son was experiencing in the countryside. The unexpected chain of events set off by this correspondence is the subject of Elya J. Zhang's contribution. The essay details Li's meteoric rise to political prominence as an "ideal attack dog" (p. 229) for the left and his just as sudden metamorphosis into "the perfect scapegoat" (p. 232) for all the excesses of the Cultural Revolution in Fujian after the downfall of the Gang of Four. Zhang uses the "exceptional case" of Li Qinglin as a "window onto the rules of the game" of the Cultural Revolution and as a telling example of how the participation and transformation of "countless unknowns" like Li, who were both agents and victims of the "illusion of power" (p. 238–39) created by the mass politics of the period help us understand larger questions, such as why the movement lasted for so long.

In the final chapter, Liyan Qin looks at two very different 1980s novels about the experiences of sent-down youth written by veterans of that movement. *Snowstorm Tonight* by Liao Xiaosheng presents a very political, "heroic," and "highly favourable," (p. 243) picture of the sent-down-youth generation, whereas Wang Xiaobo's *Golden Age* is deeply personal (even anti-political), features a rusticated youth who regards himself as a "hooligan," and is full of "shockingly frank sexual language" (p. 246). Qin calls *Snowstorm Tonight* a "sublime" novel and metaphorizes it as a "cathedral" designed to enshrine and teach the ideals of the Cultural Revolution. In contrast, *Golden Age*, which was not published in the PRC until 1994, is a "profane" work that is like a "jigsaw puzzle" meant "to entertain and provoke thought" (p. 251). These books and their histories illuminate China's path in dealing with the memory of the Cultural Revolution, with the public embracing of *Golden Age* representing a "loosening" of "the hold of the Cultural Revolution over people's psyches" (p. 265). For those with any interest in the history or politics of the Maoist era, this book should not be overlooked.

WILLIAM A. JOSEPH

*Mao and the Economic Stalinization of China, 1949–1953.*
LI HUAYU
Lanham Boulder, New York, Toronto and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006
xiii + 250 pp. £49.00
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The performance of the Chinese economy during the era of New Democracy (1949–1953) remains an enigma. We know that the inflation rate fell dramatically. We know too that the rate of economic growth accelerated. And we know that a wholesale re-distribution of assets – especially arable land – took place, one which favoured China's poor peasants and its dispossessed. But the economic data remain extremely unreliable; the State Statistical Bureau did not begin to function effectively until the mid-1950s and therefore the estimates of GDP that we have are at best conjectural. And even accepting that they are good conjectures, there is a problem of interpretation. Does rapid growth tells us anything about the effectiveness of the economic system, or was it merely an inevitable recovery from the wartime nadir of 1949?

Despite such uncertainties, Li Huayu boldly argues that the New Democracy model functioned well, and therefore that the decision to abandon it in 1953 is a puzzle. The central conundrum is therefore essentially political: what persuaded the Party to accelerate the pace of transition to socialism in the face of Stalin's opposition and "objective" evidence of successful economic performance? Li's answer is necessarily Mao-centred. For Mao Zedong, conditions in 1953 were ripe