as well as the various theoretical efforts to decipher secularization comparatively and with awareness of postcolonial critique, could have benefited Ben-Porat's already solid theoretical contribution as well as the descriptive dimensions of his discussion. Without such a consideration, however, the author's differentiation between secularism qua worldview and secularization qua process may be overstated. Secularism may have projected itself at one point as a coherent project but the phenomenology of secularism and empirical studies suggests otherwise: secularism is always path dependent and it always materializes in particular religious, cultural, and national settings.

While selectively treading in secularism studies, Ben-Porat's conceptualization of secularization qua process of change through nonformal channels (or "subpolitics") relies on theorist of globalization Ulrich Beck's work, a theoretical framework that extends without historicizing the same secularist and liberal assumptions about personhood and agency that Asad and other postcolonial critics expose. And yet, globalization is presented as an inevitable, impersonal, and exogenous force that simply happened to Israeli society (p. 22, for instance) rather than the result of sets of discourses and geopolitical agendas, including the neoliberal one, with its ideological baggage. Therefore, to construe the economic entrepreneur as nonideological presents some difficulties that do demand further reflection beyond the author's intriguing observation of the kind of liberal or republican arguments such entrepreneurs instrumentalize in furthering their agenda. In fact, both the liberal and republican arguments are equally embedded within a republican landscape that needs to be attended to. Ben-Porat's operative contrast between secularism and secularization proceeds within a nationalist myopia. In this context, a reliance on the globalization literature is very significant for his thesis because it seemingly vindicates the rationale behind Benjamin Barber's Manichean analytic prism of religion in a post–nation-state globalizing world ("Jihad vs. McWorld," *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1992).

Social Organizations and the Authoritarian State in China. By Timothy Hildebrandt. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xvi+217. $90.00.

Setsuko Matsuzawa
College of Wooster

Social Organizations and the Authoritarian State in China systematically examines and compares social organizations in three issue areas—environmental protection, HIV/AIDS prevention, and gay and lesbian rights—within four administrative regions (Beijing, Yunnan, Henan, and Sichuan). Focusing on societal actors, such as social organizations and organization leaders, Timothy Hildebrandt explores "the frequent *routine* relationships between state and society" (p. 4) in a nondemocratic regime. With its meth-

odological sophistication, the book is an incisive and innovative effort to explain the ways in which the social organizations in his study, which he describes as "self-limiting" organizations, secure their existence under authoritarian constraints.

The popular scholarly assumption on state-society relations in nondemocratic regimes is that the proliferation of social organizations will lead to the weakening of an authoritarian state. This school of thought assumes that social organizations are part of civil society and hence regarded as antithetical to an authoritarian regime. Hildebrandt argues that such a romantic view of social organizations is not helpful in explaining the complexities of state-society relations in China. His primary aim is to show that, contrary to the popular assumption, China's social organizations have actually contributed to the strengthening of the authoritarian state by functioning as service providers to the state rather than advocates for society.

A large proportion of scholarly works on China's social organizations has to date concentrated on environmental organizations, which were the first type to emerge in China. They proliferated quickly due to the central government's support as well as favorable financial assistance from international donors, and they engaged in well-publicized environmental campaigns. Hildebrandt argues that the heavy scholarly attention to environmental organizations has contributed to our limited understanding of social organizations and the development of civil society in China. He argues also that state-society relations in China vary across specific types of social organizations, geographical regions, and time periods. In his multicase study, Hildebrandt compares environmental organizations to HIV/AIDS and gay and lesbian organizations, which are, respectively, the most successful and fastest-growing social organizations of recent years. He also disaggregates the state: the central vs. local government and local governments in different geographic regions.

Hildebrandt advances the concept of the "opportunity structure" as his analytical framework for describing the larger structural and cultural environment within which China's social organizations are embedded. Informed by social movements theories, he breaks down opportunity structures into three distinct yet mutually constitutive parts: political (direct and indirect government policies), economic (the sources and distributors of funding), and personal (the personal connections between individual organization leaders and individual government officials) opportunities (p. 3–4). Hildebrandt's framework reveals how these opportunities have significantly constrained the behaviors of social organizations and organization leaders.

Hildebrandt finds that economic opportunities, such as funding, are the key concern of most social organizations and that they outweigh political opportunities, such as registration. For example, HIV/AIDS and gay and lesbian organizations, due to their lack of a diverse portfolio of activities, have fewer political opportunities to successfully register and legalize themselves than do environmental organizations. Yet, a lack of registration does not affect organizational survival in the short run, as long as government

agencies provide unregistered social organizations with funding. He also finds that social organizations, regardless of other factors (e.g., issue types, locations, and ages, etc.), perceive personal opportunities as a prerequisite for taking advantage of other opportunities.

Hildebrandt finds that social organizations are at the mercy of government agencies due to their dependency on funding or an individual official's patronage. The wish of the organizations to take advantage of the opportunities encourages competition and prevents them from developing solidarity and social capital. Hildebrandt also finds that self-sustainable social organizations are those that have learned how to adapt to narrow opportunity structures and that are flexible enough to adjust their own interests to the changing interests of local governments or donors. Thus, he concludes that social organizations are more likely to help maintain the status quo rather than to change it.

Hildebrandt's most important contribution is to provide a conceptual framework for understanding the ways in which Chinese social organizations may be strategically "self-limiting" for the sake of their survival, rather than being "co-opted" by the state or proving "opposition" to the state (p. 13). He recognizes that the existing major theoretical frameworks on social organizations, such as civil society theory and the corporatist framework, are useful, yet argues that they assume (wrongly) that most or all social organizations in authoritarian contexts are engaged in a zero-sum relationship with the state. Hildebrandt shows that while there is a large power asymmetry between the state and social organizations in China, they are in fact dependent on each other for their respective survival, for social organizations to be sustainable and autonomous, and for governments to effectively govern by fulfilling social service provisions.

Hildebrandt's conceptions of self-limiting organizations and codependence are very valuable contributions toward our understanding of state-society relations in China. However, he seems to imply that the roles of service providers and those of advocates for society are mutually exclusive, and this reviewer wonders to what extent that is true. The social organizations in his study seem to maintain multiple interests and frames and be very opportunistic. They may primarily emphasize their service provider roles but may also engage in advocacy if an opportunity arises.

Also, Hildebrandt seems to assume that the state dictates opportunity structures. Yet, this reviewer wonders whether personal opportunities can sometimes be mutually constructed. There may be cases, for example, in which social organizations are able to exercise considerable leverage over local governments to create more favorable opportunities.

Social Organizations and the Authoritarian State in China is illuminating reading with rich data that deepens our understanding of state-society relations in contemporary China. It makes important contributions to scholarship on the roles of social organizations, not only in China, but also in authoritarian contexts in general.