

editors persuasively demonstrate that rural policy was largely consensual. No leader in the early 1950s had a consistent position favoring rapid cooperativization. At times, both Mao and Deng Zihui were overzealous; at others, conservative. But once Mao made his mind up to accelerate the pace of cooperativization in mid-1955, the whole party followed.

Teiwes and Sun thus see the discussion of agricultural issues being part of the larger process of court politics that characterized Mao's rule. While arguing for this model of the policy process, they state that it was basically "a rational discussion of complex problems" (p. 16). However, while consensus building and direct advocacy were part of the process, it was still peculiar in that very few leaders and organizations were active in the discussions. For example, the State Planning Commission apparently played no role in the discussions of cooperativization. To extrapolate from their views, the policy process appears to have been organized in 1955 in vertical systems, with only specialists within the system and a few key generalist leaders participating in the policy discussion.

These views are well supported in the valuable documents presented. However, by omitting Mao's well known speech of July 31, 1955, and his remarks at the Sixth Plenum of the Seventh Central Committee, the collection is not a complete set that can be used for classes without them. Specialists are well advised to read the introductory essay, and the primary material in translation if they have not already read them.

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WILD CHINA. Text by John MacKinnon and Photographs by Nigel Hicks. Cambridge (Massachusetts): MIT Press. 1996. 208 pp. (Maps, photos.) US\$40.00, hardcover. ISBN 0-262-13329-6.

LESS THAN TWO DECADES AGO, until several years after the end of the Cultural Revolution, information on the Chinese environment, and the status of flora and fauna in particular, was scarce. Today, the involvement of the Chinese public in conservation, as well as in numerous national and international organizations, is increasing steadily. This is a beautiful book with many colour photographs but more importantly it is a key source book on the major protected areas in the country. The copious text by eminent zoologist and conservation planner, John MacKinnon, makes the book crucial to any discussion on habitat protection in China. The book is organized by regions beginning with the northeast — what was once called Manchuria, to the far north on the borders with Mongolia, then the northwest bordering on the former Soviet Asian republics, Tibet, the southwest, central China, and finally the small, truly tropical zones at various points in the extreme south. Within each section are descriptions of some of the most important protected areas of the region.

While MacKinnon “slips in” information about environmental mismanagement and ongoing threats to wildlife, he remains highly constrained by the formula of the nature picture book pioneered so long ago, in California, by Ansel Adams. There are few images of destructive land use and one wonders if photographer Nigel Hicks did not take too many pains to hide and de-emphasize the ugly but important signs of clearcuts, roads, and settlements — especially significant for new understandings of the specific needs for expanded conservation. The book comprises the views of two men, associated with the moderate approaches of WWF-Hong Kong, of the slim conservation achievements in China. Other books documenting the many less pristine, less photogenic parks and other protected areas and the imperatives for additional habitat conservation are sorely needed. This book is perhaps a bit too lovely given how bad the situation really is in the country.

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THE CITY IN MODERN CHINESE LITERATURE AND FILM: Configurations of Space, Time, and Gender. By Yingjin Zhang. *Stanford (California): Stanford University Press. 1996. xvii, 390 pp. (Index.) ISBN 0-8047-2682-5.*

IN THE LITERATURE of the Maoist era, authors tended towards the “typical” in the location of their stories, events taking place in one town or village presenting and resolving problems with nationwide significance. By contrast, many writers who have risen to prominence since the early 1980s locate their fiction squarely in their native places, celebrating uniqueness in the vast diversity of China. Thus one may talk of Mo Yan’s Gaomi County (in Shandong), Feng Jikai’s Tianjin, Wang Anyi’s Shanghai or Wang Shuo’s Beijing. At the same time, scholars within China are reexamining the contrasting cultures of their two greatest cities, the imperial capital of Beijing and the cosmopolitan metropolis of Shanghai.

Yingjin Zhang’s rich and stimulating book on the city in Chinese literature and (to a much lesser extent) film is a timely addition to this debate on regional difference. Drawing widely from the late Qing novel to fiction and film produced throughout the republican period, he explores the representations, first of the small town, and then of Beijing and Shanghai.

For republican writers, small towns are places to be escaped to, or, for those who have moved to the city, escaped back to. The visitor seeks to discover either his own identity or some unchanging national essence lost in frenetic city life. In a lengthy treatment of Shi Tuo’s *Orchard Town*, Zhang finds it to have achieved its author’s goal of embodying small-town China.

The great cities of Beijing and Shanghai, like the small town, are frequently viewed from the perspective of an outsider, the type characterized by Raymond Williams as “walking, as if alone, on its streets” (p. 302). Since