

poverty (p. 89). One may, however, consider women's use of the still-accepted language of their dependency and moral purity to justify actions with other reasons. Male authority may also not have been seriously shaken, as runaway wives were still tracked down by husbands, brought to court, and put under intense scrutiny about their motivations and actions.

While lower-class women may have been dependent on men, they were not without a community to turn to in times of need. Tenement communities in wartime Beijing helped women escape from untenable familial situations and find new jobs and partners (chapter 3), and provided crucial community recognition for marital arrangements that may not have otherwise complied with new official regulations for marriages (chapter 4). Officials and social reformers viewed the transience and crowding of the tenements as fostering immorality, criminality, and “backward” practices, leading to state surveillance efforts aimed at them—from revamping the imperial-period *baojia* to new household registration (*hukou*) and identity card (*juhuzheng*) schemes. Lower-class women, however, deployed flexible neighborhood networks to evade and manipulate this surveillance. Despite such local communal tactics, Ma argues that tenement networks were often self-serving, and not a basis for sustained solidarity or formal resistance to institutional and political agendas.

The final chapters focus on a wider spectrum of mobile lives and state attempts to manage them. Chapter 5 surveys increasingly reliable transportation that allowed women access to regional markets. Chapter 6 discusses women's use of cheap hotels and wayside inns for refuge, illicit trade, and sexual encounters. Ma reveals Beijing's lower-class women as a “driving force” for “a new relationship between womanhood and urban public space” (p. 286) that also elicited official alarm about improper female behavior in public. A female police force patrolling Beijing's tenements, train stations, and city gates (p. 293) is also mentioned, but warrants more study. Overall, these chapters expose successive wartime regimes' views of lower-class women's activities and mobility as potential threats to social and domestic order, while women themselves creatively negotiated new security measures in their struggles for survival.

The continuity of the state apparatus and vision of women's domestic and public lives of the Guomindang, Japanese, and Communists is a main insight of this book. The conclusion, however, discusses the Communists' successful recruitment of lower-class women's labor and collective political consciousness, which may mitigate the book's general assertion that lower-class women lacked such consciousness. Ultimately, though, *Runaway Wives, Urban Crimes, and Survival Tactics in Wartime Beijing* richly shows how grand narratives of “awakening and progress” (p. 11) may not account for the everyday tactics of survival and resistance of populations such as lower-class women in wartime Beijing.

ANUP GREWAL

University of Toronto
anup.grewal@utoronto.ca

The Buddha Party: How the People's Republic of China Works to Define and Control Tibetan Buddhism. By JOHN POWERS. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. xiv, 370 pp. ISBN: 9780199358151 (cloth, also available as e-book). doi:10.1017/S0021911818002723

The Buddha Party is a comprehensive study of the efforts by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to redefine Tibetan Buddhism to make it compatible with official

narratives of Chinese history and national integration. The book builds on John Powers's earlier research on the competing historical narratives of Tibet advanced by Tibetan groups and the People's Republic of China, as well as the use of history as a tool of propaganda.

The book is primarily a study of official Chinese propaganda about Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism, and how the propaganda is disseminated among Han Chinese and Tibetan communities. Powers identifies three main themes in the propaganda narrative: (1) Tibet has been part of China for centuries; (2) Tibetans are happy as a result of Chinese largesse; and (3) any incidents that might be interpreted as evidence of discontent are not what they appear to be. However, he is interested not only in the content of the propaganda, most of which is well known to students of contemporary China and Tibet, but also in "the conceptual logic" that lies behind the propaganda and "the belief system" (p. 5) that sustains and lends credence to narratives advanced by the Party machine.

Although it draws on material and scholarship from earlier periods, the book focuses its investigation on the past decade—specifically the evolution of CCP propaganda in the wake of the widespread unrest that began in Tibetan areas in 2008. The Tibetan protests against CCP policies, and in some cases against CCP rule, prompted a renewed propaganda drive targeting Tibetan Buddhism. The demonstrations showed CCP leaders that many among the current generation of Tibetans had not bought into the official narrative about Tibet despite their education in the Chinese school system. Powers notes that authorities were particularly alarmed by the fact that many young Tibetan protestors deployed religious motifs as symbols of Tibetan identity and dissent (p. 19).

Whereas Party theorists had previously dismissed Buddhism as a remnant of the feudal past, which would eventually fade away in the face of modernization, after 2008 policy makers were determined to focus propaganda efforts on religion. The book draws on multiple sources—documents, including an official training manual to be used in the patriotic education of monks and nuns, as well as interviews with Tibetans inside and outside China—to show how the Party moved to shape understandings of Tibetan Buddhism in ways that subsumed it within the larger Chinese culture and within the authority of the CCP. Powers reminds us of the infamous remark by Tibet Autonomous Region Party Secretary (2006–11) Zhang Qingli that the Party is the real "living Buddha" for Tibetans and a "parent" to them (p. 47).

Powers also documents PRC efforts to control religious institutions by investing in Buddhist colleges and studies that influence the interpretation of Buddhist doctrines. He also documents the Party's efforts to control the institution of *tülku* reincarnation by setting guidelines for the recognition and validation of *tülkus* and for their subsequent education.¹ These regulations also apply to the Dalai Lama, who Chinese authorities insist will only legitimately reincarnate in China. Powers draws attention to the questionable historical studies drawn upon to justify Chinese state control over the process of recognizing Tibetan Buddhism's most revered bodhisattva.

One of the book's most important observations is that the work of propaganda has over the years involved multiple agencies—Party and government bodies as well as research, education, and religious institutions—such that official narratives of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism have weaved themselves so thoroughly through mainstream society and the body politic that they are beyond the control of any one institution. Powers draws on his interactions in the classroom with Han Chinese students to argue

¹*Tülkus* are custodians of Tibetan Buddhist teachings and are known for their reincarnation.

that official narratives have taken firm root among Han Chinese. Powers rightly notes that propaganda efforts to redefine Tibetan Buddhism (and Tibetan culture and history) have been highly successful among Han Chinese. And he helpfully draws on the psychology literature to explain the appeal of the propaganda to mainstream Chinese audiences.

At the same time, Powers highlights the failure of the CCP to change Tibetan minds and documents continued Tibetan resistance to CCP propaganda. His interviews with seventeen monks and nuns who had been subjected to patriotic reeducation revealed that all saw nothing new in the “shit lies” (p. 71), as described by some of the interviewees, being presented about Tibetan history and religion. Although the focus of the book is on official propaganda, Powers could have usefully extended the discussion of Tibetan resistance to official attempts to redefine Tibetanness. He might have looked to the post-2008 renaissance in Tibetan-language literature and to the burgeoning online debate about Buddhism and what it means to be Tibetan in today’s China.

Overall, *The Buddha Party* is an excellent book that will be essential reading for students of contemporary Tibet. It is a handy and accessible classroom resource for courses on contemporary China that address the PRC’s ethnic policies and the status of the country’s ethnic nationalities. The book focuses on Tibetans, but it is highly relevant for understanding Chinese nationalism and the narratives that underpin the Chinese Dream—Xi Jinping’s vision for the great rejuvenation of China. It will also be helpful to those wishing to gain a greater understanding of current events in Xinjiang, where Islam is being similarly targeted as a threat to national integration and China’s return to world power status.

BEN HILLMAN

Australian National University
ben.hillman@anu.edu.au

Novel Medicine: Healing, Literature, and Popular Knowledge in Early Modern China. By ANDREW SCHONEBAUM. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016. viii, 283 pp. ISBN: 9780295995182 (cloth, also available in paper and as e-book). doi:10.1017/S0021911818002735

Andrew Schonebaum has written an insightful and original historical work on popular medicine and literature in late imperial China. This study captures the convergence of two long-standing research themes in Chinese literature, one on vernacular literature as a critique of the overemphasis on the “metropolitan language culture,” meaning the centrally positioned neo-Confucian culture, a theme brilliantly developed by the late Glen Dudbridge, and the other on the relevance and importance of medical things in such literature, a topic opened up by the erudite Wilt Idema in 1977.¹ In *Novel Medicine*, Schonebaum brings vernacular medicine to the fore by analyzing the intertextuality of the popular

¹Glen Dudbridge, *Books, Tales and Vernacular Culture: Selected Papers on China* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Wilt Idema, “Diseases and Doctors, Drugs and Cures: A Very Preliminary List of Passages of Medical Interest in a Number of Traditional Chinese Novels and Related Plays,” *Chinese Science* 2 (1977): 37–63. Idema’s article was published much earlier than the Chinese book co-authored by a famous modern doctor and a distinguished scholar of literature, Chen Cunren 陳存仁 and Song Qi