

PetroChina, makes, but how much Jiang Jiemin earns as chairman of the parent group is unclear. Moreover, the 53 largest Chinese state-owned enterprises are part of the central nomenklatura, which means that their CEOs are managed and appointed by the Chinese Communist Party's Central Organization Department and not by their company boards.

In short, Steinfeldt underestimates how the Chinese party-state continues to control its 'national champions' according to rules that are neither transparent nor decided by Western procedural rules and practices.

However, *Playing Our Game* provides an interesting perspective on the consequences and perspectives of China's and Chinese companies' integration into the global economy. The book is well researched and relies on extensive source material in Chinese as well as in English. Of particular interest is the author's account of how China National Off-shore Oil Company (CNOOC) operates based on his first-hand knowledge as member of CNOOC's International Advisory Board 2001-2009. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the forces shaping the evolution of Chinese big business.

*Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard*  
*Professor and Director*  
*Asia Research Centre*  
*Copenhagen Business School*

**Zheng Yongnian**, *The Chinese Communist Party as the Organizational Emperor: Culture, Reproduction and Transformation*. London and New York: Routledge, 2009, 254 pp., notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 978-0-415-55965-2 (paperback), 978-0-415-55963-8 (hardback).

Few could deny that the study of the Chinese Communists (the CCP) holds the key to China's modern political, economic and social development. Yet since Schurmann's classic *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (1966), there have been few attempts to lay out a conceptual framework of the CCP as the central organizational force in post-reform China, until the study was again revived not long ago and several book-length works published (Brødsgaard & Zheng 2007; Shambaugh 2008; Dickson 2008; Zheng 2009; Gore 2010). While all five volumes address the key issue of reforms and changes in the ideology and organization of the post-reform CCP, Zheng's *Organizational Emperor* stands out as it tackles head-on the most challenging issue in the study of the CCP and indeed Chinese politics, namely, the very nature of the Party as a

political, cultural and organizational phenomenon in the light of China's recent historical experiences. According to the author, the CCP could be understood best as the 'organizational emperor', an organizational form of the traditional political institution that had ruled China for more than 2,000 years.

The book is divided into eight chapters. The first two chapters lay down the theoretical foundation for studying the CCP. In the first chapter, Zheng highlights the importance of the CCP in terms of its co-evolution with the huge socio-economic changes in China. This continuous domination of the Party amidst rapid changes, termed cultural reproduction in this work, demands revision of current paradigms. Drawing on the sociological insights of the prominent thinkers Bourdieu and Foucault on power, and other prominent thinkers on the state and state-building, the author places the foundation of his theory of the CCP in a global comparative perspective. The third chapter brings in the historical perspective by delineating the ideas of the modern state in the form of the CCP and tracing the structural changes in state organization from late Qing to the present age.

After a brief discussion of the historical revolution of the CCP, the next four chapters each address one of the key aspects of the organizational emperor, focusing on the structure of its domination and reproduction. The fourth chapter traces the evolution of the rules and norms of power succession that emerged after the death of Mao. Through a careful review of the contingencies and changing socio-political settings in the post-Maoist era, the author highlights the changing power structure that enabled the institutionalization of power-sharing and rules of succession. The fifth chapter focuses on a classical theme in Chinese politics, namely the Party's domination of the state. Building on the previous discussion, the sixth chapter discusses the changing forms of domination in the last two decades. Lastly, the seventh chapter discusses the Party's domination and reproduction of knowledge and ideology. By examining the changes in CCP's propaganda system and course structures of the Central Party School, the author demonstrates convincingly that the Party has adopted a proactive role in adopting new ideas and reinventing old ideologies to maintain and consolidate its cultural hegemony.

In the final chapter the author returns to the question of perhaps the highest public as well as academic concern, namely the future of the Chinese polity. Defying easy pessimistic (China Collapse Theory) or optimistic (Rise of China Model) views of China's political develop-

ment, the author tends to leave the question open to the work of actual socio-political forces. While ruling out an easy and rapid transition to a Western-style democracy, the author nevertheless argues that the organizational emperor contains the possibility of self-transformation through intra-party democracy.

Overall, *The Chinese Communist Party as the Organizational Emperor* offers a unique insight into the nature of the CCP and China's political development. As a Western-educated Chinese political scientist and an expert on contemporary China, the author was able to combine the theoretical observations from leading Western thinkers and China's unique historical heritage. The idea of emperor was invoked not simply as a rhetorical device, but as the foundation for a powerful analytical framework. Besides theoretical clarity and intuitiveness, the new framework, although still not fully complete in an analytical sense, brings forward a way to reflect on the greater question of China's modern state-building in a comparative-historical perspective, thus making the work valuable to political scientists as well as historians of modern China in general. In particular, the focus on the reproduction of the Party and its domination has rarely been seen in other works on contemporary China. This peculiar angle of analysis could well anticipate further works on Chinese history in similar directions.

While this excellent volume provides any reader interested in contemporary China a novel and insightful way to understand the nature of the CCP and the Chinese polity in the post-reform era, it is perhaps still not sufficient to fully satisfy the curiosity of some of the more historically or theoretically inclined readers. The more historically inclined readers will perhaps want to read a theoretically informed, dynamic account of the evolution of Chinese polities from traditional emperor to the CCP party-state, through the actual historical events, such as the 1911 revolution, the civil and Sino-Japanese wars, through Maoist state-building to its present post-reform form. The theoretically inclined readers may demand some further theorizing about the CCP's nature and its historical evolution in a global comparative framework. But again, these are only minor shortcomings, since it was quite impossible to satisfy such hefty demands; and indeed, there has been no precedence in overseas China studies that answered all the important historical and theoretical questions regarding China's state-building and transformation in a 200-page book.

*Huang Yanjie*  
*East Asian Institute*  
*National University of Singapore*

## REFERENCES

- Brødsgaard, Kjeld Erik and Zheng Yongnian (eds.) 2006. *Chinese Communist Party in Reform*. London: Routledge.
- Dickson, Bruce J. 2008. *Wealth into Power: The Communist Party's Embrace of China's Private Sector*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gore, Lance 2010. *The Chinese Communist Party and China's Capitalist Revolution: The Political Impact of Market*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Schurmann, Franz 1966. *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Shambaugh, David 2008. *Chinese Communist Party: Atrophy and Adaptation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Zheng Yongnian 2009. *The Chinese Communist Party as the Organizational Emperor: Culture, Reproduction and Transformation*. London and New York: Routledge.