

and Gabrielle M. Spiegel, "Medievalisms Old and New: The Rediscovery of Alterity in North American Medieval Studies," *American Historical Review* 103 (1998), 677–704.

² Jacob R. Marcus, ed., *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book* (New York 1938); Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, eds., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York 1969); Katharina M. Wilson, ed., *Medieval Women's Visionary Literature* (New York 1986); John Shinner, ed., *Medieval Popular Religion: A Reader* (Peterborough, Ont. 1997); Thomas F. X. Noble and Thomas Head, eds., *Soldiers of Christ: Saints and Saints' Lives from Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (University Park, Penn. 1995); Jo Ann McNamara and John E. Halborg, eds., *Sainted Women of the Dark Ages* (Durham 1992). Many translated sources are conveniently available through *The Online Medieval Sourcebook* at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html>.

³ For example, John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago 1980) contains an appendix of eighteen texts.

Bruce Gilley, *Tiger on the Brink, Jiang Zemin and China's New Elite* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

In the immediate aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre the transition from the second to the third generation of Chinese Communist Party leadership acquired a specific form: an increasingly frail, diminutive Deng Xiaoping brought a bespectacled, rotund Jiang Zemin into the political limelight. Deng Xiaoping supported, protected, and cultivated the political future of Jiang Zemin, ensuring Jiang's methodical rise through the ranks. By 1994, Jiang had assumed the titles of State President, Party General Secretary, Chairman of the Central Military Commission, Core Leader, and Chief Engineer. Bruce Gilley's *Tiger on the Brink* traces Jiang's career and demonstrates that, while not inevitable, Jiang's ascendancy to the centre of the post-1989 Chinese leadership was based on years of active participation in high-level Chinese politics, most notably as mayor of Shanghai. Gilley furnishes a much-needed outline of Jiang's political involvement from the 1940s through 1998 and provides the reader with insight into both elite factional politics in post-Mao China and the personality of China's leader.

An emphasis on the relative positioning of Jiang Zemin vis-à-vis existing and emerging factions within the Chinese leadership leads Gilley to conclude that Jiang's success derived, perhaps counter-intuitively, from a weak personal power base. Jiang perfected the art of consensus politics and currying favour with influential persons; he never enjoyed the unquestioned support of one faction in particular. Gilley's provocative argument stems from thorough research of factional alignments at various historical moments relevant to Jiang's political career. Gilley's overwhelming concern with *who* forged alliances with whom, however, comes at the expense of careful analysis of

policy formulation, ideological debates, and the crisis of Marxism that followed the dissolution of the Soviet Union, international reaction to the Tiananmen Square massacre, and China's increasing integration into a neo-liberal global economy. Gilley's telling of the story of Jiang's rise primarily as a one of political maneuvering reveals unquestioned acceptance of two framing discourses – one, continuity of an emperor-centred (and presumably irrational) political system in China *despite* a century of revolutions and, two, a teleology of development that privileges neo-liberal economics. The accompanying assumptions about history and politics, China and “the West” preclude a critical account of Jiang's political career and open the text to criticism for superficial historicism and an untheorized dismissal of Marxism as irrelevant to China at the end of the twentieth century.

Uncritical use of terminology equating Jiang Zemin, Deng Xiaoping, and Mao Zedong with emperors of Confucian China surfaces throughout and is reflected in chapter titles such as “Independent Kingdom” and “The Emperor's Mandate.” Gilley ignores debates among China scholars about the relevance of such categories in twentieth century China in favour of a facile presentation of Chinese politics as Byzantine. He invokes spatial and temporal tropes that portray the consensus politics practiced by Jiang Zemin as a product of a time and place *other* than “the modern West.” Allusions to ancient historical myths often act as explanation of the cultural milieu out of which Jiang emerged and the political culture in which he participates. Even when Gilley refers to twentieth century historical events or figures, his references tend to obscure more than they clarify. The comparison of Jiang's nationalist sentiments with those of one of the preeminent writers and social critics of modern China, Lu Xun, is unconvincing unless we impose a banal definition of modern Chinese nationalism on both: “China was China and the United States was the United States, Jiang believed, and the two would forever be at odds” (210).

Loose historical references and the extended metaphor of Jiang as emperor allow Gilley continuously to explain the apparent contradiction between economic liberalism and political conservatism in Jiang's thought as a tension within Jiang's personality. This tension, Gilley asserts, arises out of Jiang's imperial pretensions and his “modernist” impulses; the former associated with China, the latter with scientific knowledge and economic development. At times, Gilley seems to be suggesting that Jiang is moving China away from particularism toward universalism. Gilley states: “Jiang also had a worldliness that distinguished him from Mao and Deng. He could discuss the aperture between the circuits in a semiconductor with one researcher and chaos theory and its possible applications to history with another. ... And within months of its appearance, Jiang was even quoting from the American professor Samuel Huntington's influential book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*” (229-230). I hope I am not alone in expressing concern that knowledge of circuits and Huntington's

analysis of world order suffice as “worldliness” over a continual, albeit troubled, engagement since the 1920s by Chinese Communist Party leadership with issues of social justice, egalitarianism, imperialism, and women’s emancipation.

Tiger on the Brink leaves us with the impression that Marxism for the Chinese Communist Party is void of commitment to socialist goals and simply has become synonymous with Party control and repression. While this holds a great deal of truth for the fate of Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought in late twentieth century China, more attention needs to be given to how Marxism was transformed by various leaders, including Jiang Zemin, into a legitimating backdrop for “developmental dictatorship.” Gilley does not delve sufficiently into the content and implications of policies and campaigns to shed light on this transformation. The decision in October 1996, for example, to allow partial divestment of state-owned enterprises to improve performance redefined shareholding as “public ownership” as long as the state held a controlling share. This, Gilley notes, preserved the myth of China as a socialist state even as state enterprises were being dismantled. Such a redefinition, however, begs several questions: one, how and when did socialism assume the narrow definition of ownership of means of production?; two, how, when, and why did economic efficiency replace social justice in the official discourse as the standard of evaluation?; three, what was Jiang’s role in these changes?; and, fourth, what are the implications for social justice in China of such redefinitions? *Tiger on the Brink* fails to address these questions. As a result, it judges lightly Jiang’s developmental dictatorship.

Gilley sums up the biography by stating “As an individual, Jiang is arrogant, but at the same time self-effacing. He has committed minor sins, but he is not a man to hate” (332). Are we to understand, then, that dictatorship – which has included strident control of the media and a willingness to use force against dissidents – is only a minor sin when coupled with neo-liberal development? Gilley suggests as much as he maintains an opposition throughout the biography between scientific rationality and Maoism. Jiang’s hard-liner tendencies are attributed to tactics of political survival necessary in Mao’s China (43) and his paternalism ostensibly has roots in a traditional upbringing (104). But, both are “offset” by his desire for stability and economic reform; in Gilley’s words, “Like Mao, Jiang was obsessed with political control; ... Unlike Mao, however, Jiang’s allegiance to Marxism was in doubt, and he did not harbor radical social ideas, he was a social conservative” (286).

Gilley tends to separate Jiang Zemin, the economic reformer from Jiang, the political conservative. Even as he provides detailed discussion of Jiang’s role in repressing student demonstrations in 1986 and 1989, Gilley speaks of Jiang “as a leader who ushered in a truly modern Chinese state” (241). The discursive frameworks within which Gilley embeds the story of Jiang’s rise to

power allow Gilley grudgingly to accept Jiang's undemocratic political practices on the promise of economic reform. This acceptance is the cost accrued by locating Jiang Zemin within a development trajectory that denies socialist China anything but an aberrant role. While *Tiger on the Brink* offers a detailed narrative of Jiang's political career, a more critically engaged analysis of Chinese politics and Jiang Zemin demands critique of the cult of developmentalism – not to embrace the cult of Mao but to explain further the intimate links between developmentalism and Jiang's success in China and internationally.

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Gerald Friedman, *State-Making and Labor Movements: France and the United States, 1876-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

The value of comparative history and the rationale underlying it, writes historian Colleen Dunlavy, is its “ability to expose otherwise invisible paradigms that become second-nature in the historiography of every nation.”¹ However, in using the comparative method Gerald Friedman is less concerned with illuminating lacunae in nationally-oriented history than in criticizing history written from an Orthodox Marxist (“OM,” in his shorthand) perspective. In *State-Making and Labor Movements*, Friedman argues that labour historians, trapped by their Marxist orientation, have failed to explain either the United States’ “exceptionally” conservative labour movement and absence of significant socialist movements or European, that is, French, labour radicalism.

The problem lies in labour history's focus on the agency of working people to the exclusion of the views and actions of other classes — especially those classes that stood as allies to labour or possessed the power to restrain labour's choices and fields of action. In Friedman's view, the constraints working people have faced and the help they have received from allies is more important to successful labour movements than labour activism itself. To the not-so-new labour historians this may be heresy, but Friedman steadfastly insists that in a world of unequal power relations, labour needed (and presumably still needs) allies among sympathetic members of the bourgeoisie and state elite to succeed. Drawing upon the social movement theory of Sidney Tarrow, Friedman argues that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries organized labour sought alliances and grew more radical to press opportunities when state politics was friendly and retreated into conservative postures in self-defense when employers counterattacked. These “cycles of contention” form the substance of Friedman's comparison between France and