

The chapter also describes the complex alliance strategies that the CCP and its different offices and authorities had to deploy with the Tibetan rulers and elites in 1950 and 1951 in the hope of quickly putting into place “democratic reforms.”

The third chapter, “A Time to Change,” is devoted to Chinese revolutionary impatience in Xikang¹ and the Tibetan zones of Sichuan in the mid-1950s. There, the road linking Sichuan to Lhasa, finished in 1954, favoured Tibetan private capitalist businesses and Indian imports. A response was needed: “democratic reforms” were initiated, guns “borrowed” (meaning seized), and monastery property confiscated. However, this provoked massive revolts. “Democratic reforms” became a “reform war” involving the bombing of monasteries with the approval of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, who was posted in Sichuan at the time (p. 140).

Chapter Four, “A New Phase,” shows that the Central United Front department was probably behind the September 1956 directive that obliged the Tibet Work Committee to postpone once again the inevitable reforms in central Tibet.

“A Waiting Game,” the fifth chapter, is devoted to this pause. In May 1957, Mao granted a six-year reprieve (until the next Five-year Plan) to the Tibetan government to undertake “democratic reforms.” The chapter ends with the mention of a rarely cited economic problem, the lucrative cross-border trade between India and central Tibet (and its national consequences), tolerated until it was banned in December 1957.

The last chapter, “The Showdown,” describes “the reform war of Sichuan (...) duplicated in Gansu” (p. 249). The situation was “even more violent” in Qinghai (*ibid.*) and the victims more numerous. Liu shows, moreover, that Mao Zedong had planned to send more than one million young colonists organised as “people’s communes” into Tibetan territory (central Tibet, Sichuan, and Gansu) to settle on its outer fringes, but functioning as armed troops inside. This old tactic known as *tunken* (a military-agricultural camp implanted on a border to be conquered) is well known in China and its purpose is to take over new territories (p. 260-1), but Liu shows that Mao postponed its launch until January 1959.

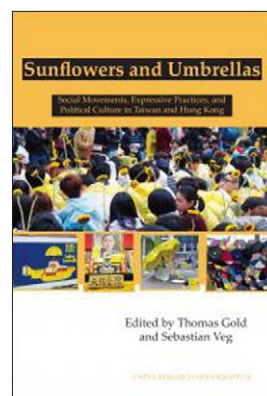
In the epilogue, Liu returns to the international consequences of the absorption of central Tibet by the PRC, for example the rapprochement between the United States and India.

Not without provocation, Liu claims a “Sino-centric and historic approach” (p. 5) based on Chinese sources. Paradoxically, this is the great value of this study, carried out with remarkable rigour and critical distance. This fascinating account, punctuated by quotation marks that indicate both the ideological weight of the terms used and their reality, often very different and contradictory in the field, highlights the specific problems the rulers and cadres of the CCP at the central, provincial, and local levels had to face in order to extract themselves from what one might call, in more contemporary terms, the Tibetan quagmire, which they had contributed to creating through their lack of understanding of this society, its history, and its aspirations. Sixty years later, this lack of understanding is still relevant. Finally, the book is full of data and information that to my knowledge have not been published before – data to which the brief format of this review

cannot do justice. However, one must point out that the author has had the good taste to render proper and common Tibetan nouns in a transcription that owes nothing to *pinyin*, a choice that demonstrates a respect for the conventions in force in Tibetan studies not that often found in the work of sinologist researchers.

■ Translated by Elizabeth Guill.

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GOLD, Thomas, and Sebastian VEG (eds.). 2020. *Sunflowers and Umbrellas: Social Movements, Expressive Practices, and Political Culture in Taiwan and Hong Kong*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

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Sunflowers and Umbrellas: Social Movements, Expressive Practices, and Political Culture in Taiwan and Hong Kong is a fascinating collection of essays edited by Thomas Gold and Sebastian Veg that provides a fresh view on the Sunflower Movement in Taiwan and the Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong. The significance and unexpectedness of the movements in spring and autumn 2014 renewed broader scholarly interest in Hong Kong’s political developments and in comparative studies of Taiwan and Hong Kong. The genesis of the book reflects the dramatic changes in both places and the subsequent sharp diversion in the political agency of their populations. Several of the authors make crucial references to what at the time of writing were still ongoing protests in Hong Kong in 2019 and 2020. The decentralised and fluid protest

1. Xikang refers to an ephemeral Tibetan province created by the Chinese Republicans in 1928 and that encompassed Tibetan areas on the Sino-Tibetan frontier. It was dissolved in 1955 by the CCP and merged with Sichuan Province.

forms of the "Anti-extradition Law Amendment Bill Movement" offers an important contrast to the Umbrella Movement through their impact on leadership and strategy (p. 36-7) and a further politicisation of cultural expressions such as music (p. 169). At the time of publication, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen was returned to office in a landslide victory, which was interpreted as a rejection of Chinese influence, while in Hong Kong the National Security Law marked the beginning of a comprehensive crackdown on political freedoms and civil liberties.

The book acknowledges the China factor, i.e. the influence of the People's Republic of China on the socioeconomic, political, and cultural aspects of Hong Kong and Taiwanese societies (Wu 2019). Yet, it "proposes a more granular approach that pays close attention to the dynamics and textures of the movement" (p. 9). In their inspiring introduction, Gold and Veg offer a critical assessment of studies on both movements and highlight their aim to go beyond the rationalist and cost-benefit calculations that dominate social movement theory. Instead of looking at opportunity structures, they focus on participative performances and "expressive and symbolic dimensions" (*ibid.*). Hence, a significant part of the book examines (transient) artistic articulations together with the spatiality of the protests and their impact on identities and political culture. The subsequent eight chapters are written by a great selection of scholars, ranging from leading area studies researchers to junior academics and emerging talents. Contributors embrace methodological eclecticism, including participant observations, structured interviews, archival research, and the analysis of sensory artistic expressions.

Edmund Cheng's chapter on the nature of leadership in "a polycentric protest structure" examines the impact of "organizational and spatial dimensions" on strategies and decision-making processes of "media-designated," "place-based" leaders during the Umbrella Movement (p. 22). He argues that movement leaders were constrained not only "by the shadow of Beijing authorities" (p. 38) but also by different interpretations of past protest experiences as well as "spatial conflicts and place-based identities" (p. 37). Ming-sho Ho, Chun-hao Huang, and Liang-ying Lin turn towards movement followers and offer a compelling examination of their mental universe, focusing on how they "articulate their own moral visions, and share their authentic personal feelings" (p. 45). Their analysis of a Sunflower Movement digital archive addresses various shortcomings of opinion surveys on the movement. They find that grassroots writings embrace a "democratic nationalism" (p. 56) that differs significantly from the framing by the movement's leadership, which highlighted economic arguments at the expense of Taiwanese identity.

Wai-man Lam's study traces the evolution of political activism and the rise of *yong mo* (勇武) – valiant activism without baseline – and the lasting influence on Hong Kong's political culture and identity. Ian Rowen outlines the impact of the dramatic increase in Chinese tourism to Taiwan and particularly Hong Kong. He argues that while this tourism triggered a new political movement, localism, in Hong Kong, the Sunflower

Movement spared Taiwan from more confrontational domestic developments on the matter. Brian Hioe offers a comprehensive account of the visuality and aurality of the Sunflower Movement. He argues that the visual imagery was a "crucial vehicle for discourse among social movement activists" (p. 124) and enabled transformations that suspended practices of the everyday. Hioe then traces incorporations of the movements' visuality and aurality into electoral politics. Sebastian Veg's chapter is a fascinating analysis of the evolution of musical expressions in Hong Kong's protests and its power "in mobilizing emotional publics," thus complementing the "rationalist view of claims and opportunities" (p. 149). Veg illustrates how protest music increasingly expresses a participatory and civic musical identity of the community and how the Anti-extradition Movement continued this development. Judith Pernin's excellent comparison of protest documentaries in Taiwan and Hong Kong convincingly argues that the Umbrella Movement represented a radical new form of activism in Hong Kong, which explains the significantly larger amount of works by local directors on the subject. The Sunflower Movement in Taiwan, on the other hand, is part of a longer history of democracy activism. Unfortunately, the chapter misses a discussion of the award-winning "The Edge of Night" (*Jietou* 街頭) by Chiang Wei-hua (2018), which offers a rare connection between different movements.

The last two chapters of the book examine the impact of the movements on political culture and elections. Lev Nachman outlines how activists were motivated by personal conflict or dissatisfaction with existing parties rather than ideological differences when creating new post-Sunflower Movement parties. Ngok Ma examines the political awakening of young professionals after the Umbrella Movement and the subsequent politicisation of professional organisations, which indicates the emergence of a new political culture and cross-societal and sectorial solidarity.

The book offers empirically extremely rich materials, and the thick descriptions of the movement spaces and developments on the ground allow the reader to feel connected to participants and leaders in the movements. Indeed, the recognition that emotions are at the forefront or provide crucial context links the different examinations. The authors observe how emotions are expressed in artwork (p. 57-9) and argue that an "aggravated feeling of alienation" (p. 75), a "sense of loss" (p. 126), and the wish to "instill hope" (p. 236) motivate new forms of activism and participation. This not only confirms the findings of Ho's (2019) seminal work on both movements, but also highlights the importance of affects for the understanding of contemporary politics in Taiwan and Hong Kong. In times when Hong Kong's domestic and Taiwan geopolitical situations appear to elicit despair rather than hope, this is an important contribution of this excellent publication.

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