both issues, by linking infanticide to such a hotly contested issue as abortion, he inevitably places his research within the context of an ongoing partisan debate. While dramatic, this linkage is both spurious and unnecessary to the author's stated goals.

Finally, the chapter on infanticide deniers is flawed by associating the denial of widespread child murder in China to denial of certain other traumatic events despite growing factual evidence. The chapter is devoted primarily to the debate between French Catholics and Protestants over the extent of female infanticide. Yet by framing it in this manner, the author sets up an unspoken analogy with Holocaust denial and pre-emptively characterizes anyone who might question his own claims of "unknown millions of exterminated girls" (p. 129) as an infanticide denier. What is lost, of course, is a more open and fruitful inquiry as to the actual extent of female infanticide.

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Guoqi Xu. *Strangers on the Western Front: Chinese Workers in the Great War*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2011. Pp. viii, 336. $39.95.

Between August 1916 and the end of the Great War some 140,000 Chinese laborers landed in France to support the Allied war effort. Roughly 100,000 of them were attached to the British Expeditionary Force and the remainder worked for the French. Although some worked in civilian factories, many more labored near the frontlines, digging trenches and building fortifications. Several thousand died in the line of duty. This important story, long neglected, has now found its historian. As the first full-length account in English of the history of the Chinese Labor Corps in the Great War, Xu Guoqi's book makes a crucial contribution to the history of the war and, more importantly, to the history of China's role in international affairs.

Xu sets this story within the context of the dual, interlinked processes of China's nationalization and internationalization in the early twentieth century, when China was transformed from a celestial empire into a modern nation that sought its place in an emerging international society. This episode, he argues, is central to China's transition from "passive" internationalization, when the Chinese merely reacted to the challenges of Western power, to an "active" one as they embraced Western ideas and practices and worked to promote China's national interests. Thus, Beijing's decision to allow the Allies to recruit Chinese labor was part of a strategic bid to improve China's international standing in and attain a voice at the postwar peace table.

Based on creative and exhaustive archival research in Canada, China, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, successive chapters lay out the story in its many facets. The narrative begins with the process of recruitment, in which candidates, most coming from the north China countryside, underwent thorough medical exams and were assigned serial numbers by which they would be known and (more importantly) paid for the duration of their European sojourn. For most, the long trip to France began with a Pacific crossing and then an arduous journey through Canada, where the authorities, worried that laborers would try to stay in Canada, kept them as virtual prisoners on the trains.

In France, the laborers worked ten-hour days, lived in harsh and sometimes dangerous conditions, and were often treated poorly by their British, French, and American supervisors (some of the laborers were seconded to American units). Misunderstandings were common, such as when, for example, the Chinese took offense to the command "Let's go!" (*gou* means "dog" in Mandarin). Americans were especially disliked as overseers owing to, one Chinese official reported, their hot tempers, rigid rules, and racist attitudes. On the whole, however, the Chinese worked with energy and efficiency, and they did have some positive interactions with Western soldiers and civilians. In fact, several thousands of them remained in France after the war, many marrying French women and establishing families.

Xu conveys a rich view of the laborers' experiences and interactions in Europe from a number of perspectives: Chinese, British, American, and (to a somewhat lesser extent) French. But since he never lingers for long in any particular locale or on any one individual, the story sometimes takes on an anecdotal, episodic feel. One wishes that the author had devoted a full chapter to a single locale or individual, following that narrative thread all the way through. Such an approach could have added yet another compelling element to the work.

Perhaps the most intriguing section of this book focuses on the impact of the story not on the war in Europe but on China itself. For many Western-educated Chinese intellectuals, encounters with their working-class compatriots in Europe proved to be transformative. Especially compelling is the case of Yan Yangchu (commonly known by his Western name, James Yen), a Yale graduate who gained fame in the 1920s for launching a Mass Education Movement in China and becoming a major intellectual force in the Republican era. Yan first saw the importance of educating the Chinese masses while working with Chinese laborers in France, where he had set up literacy programs and published a Chinese-language newspaper.

Although we know little about what happened to the Chinese workers after they left Europe, Xu has discovered intriguing testimonies to the lessons they learned there about patriotism, industry, worker's rights, and the role of women in society, all loci of crucial transformations in interwar China. In his conclusion, Xu labels the labor corps the "harbingers of China's progressive internationalization" (p. 226), but also draws a parallel between their experieces and those of contemporary Chinese labor migrants, moving this time from the countryside to the cities within China itself. This parallel may be strained, but it is also suggestive of the possible impacts on Chinese society of the current massive wave of labor migration. In this way, as in others,

Xu's illuminating study advances our understanding of China's place in the modern world.

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Chang-tai Hung. *Mao's New World: Political Culture in the Early People's Republic*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2011. Pp. xv, 352. $39.95.

Since the appearance of David Holm's seminal doctoral thesis in 1979 on art and ideology in the Yan'an period, there has been a steady stream of scholarship examining the mechanisms of control exerted over cultural production by the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) leadership, and the extent to which cultural producers willingly acceded to the political demands made upon them, or, conversely, employed covert strategies to subvert the will of their political masters. Most of these works cover a large chunk, if not the entire period of CCP ascendancy and rule (some going into the 1980s and beyond), and most tend to focus on one aspect of cultural production: painting, film, music, literature, drama. Chang-Tai Hung takes on the ambitious task of covering several cultural forms and confines his analysis to the first decade of the People's Republic of China (PRC), when cultural strategies and systems were being refined and expanded to help consolidate CCP rule and disseminate party policies.

Hung's book covers some of the key visual and linguistic means—"symbols, rituals, and pictorial representations" (p. 5)—by which the CCP aimed to raise the political consciousness of the populace. These range from the significant expansion of Tiananmen Square (whose dimensions ended up vastly surpassing those of the Soviet Union's Red Square), the ambitious construction of grand buildings and monuments in Beijing, and the holding of national parades to the popular *yangge* folk dance style, oil paintings, cartoons, and New Year prints. Hung utilizes a broad range of sources to tease out the mechanics of power in 1950s China, revealing how decisions on cultural projects were made, by whom, and with what success in terms of their reception by the general public. Hung focuses on three themes—Soviet influence, the assertion of national pride (particularly after the Sino-Soviet split), and authoritarian rule by the CCP—to integrate the diverse cultural forms explored.

Some of the material included by Hung will be familiar to scholars of Chinese cultural history. For example, Hung relates the fate of the iconic painting, *Founding Ceremony of the Nation*, whose creator, Dong Xiwen, was required to alter it on no less than three occasions—a vivid reminder of the CCP's firm intention to bend history to suit its own ideological purposes. Hung also discusses visits to China by cultural advisers (almost 20,000 of them in the 1950s) from the Soviet Union, sent to "guide" their Chinese counterparts in everything from oil painting technique to the optimal size of Tiananmen Square; the employment of cartoons to satirize and demean perceived enemies of the state; and the cult of personality that was already growing up around the figure of Mao Zedong in the early years of the PRC. Less well known perhaps are the high-level deliberations over the look and purpose of an enlarged Tiananmen Square and the major buildings that were to be erected in it; the considerations that governed sites of remembrance for fallen heroes of the revolution; and the organization surrounding mass state spectacles, like the National Day and May Day celebrations.

Occasionally, I would take issue with Hung's analysis, such as his observation that the purpose of the mass gatherings of the PRC, "to shape a different kind of populace—a politically active throng whose energy could be harnessed as a revolutionary force to build a new nation" (p. 261), differed from that of totalitarian regimes under Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler, as defined by Hannah Arendt. Hung's contention that, unlike the PRC, "strong . . . nationalism was not evident in the Soviet Union [in the 1950s]" (p. 262) would also need to be more carefully argued.

These minor points notwithstanding, the book makes a definite contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of cultural politics and political culture during the PRC's formative era. It draws on an impressive array of (often untapped) sources, especially in the Chinese language, and provides a wealth of detail on processes that underpinned cultural production in 1950s China. Hung's exploration of the lukewarm reception given to new-style *nianhua* by China's peasants, for example, goes further than most other scholarly works on the topic. Particularly revealing are the schisms among Chinese cultural officials themselves, and with their Soviet counterparts, over the final form and symbolic meaning of several of the grandiose projects initiated in the 1950s. Eminently readable and informative, this book steadily builds up a comprehensive picture of the complexities of forging a new collective vision for a vast nation like China by means of cultural images and icons.

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Carole McGranahan. *Arrested Histories: Tibet, the CIA, and Memories of a Forgotten War*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press. 2010. Pp. xvii, 307. Cloth $84.95, paper $23.95.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army arrived at the borders of Tibet and successfully incorporated that *de facto* independent nation into the People's Republic of China in 1950. At first, Chinese rule was benign, and troops and officials were ordered to respect and observe the cultural norms of the Tibetan communities. But within a few short years Beijing began to impose radical social changes in eastern Tibet/western Sichuan and southern Qinghai (Kham), resulting in a popular uprising against Chinese rule that soon engulfed much of Tibet. This revolt went on from the mid-1950s until 1974 and was led predominately by a self-styled resistance army called *Chushi Gangdrug* (four rivers, six