Arthur Kleinman, Yunxiang Yan, Jing Jun, Sing Lee, Everett Zhang, Pan Tianshu, Wu Fei, Guo Jinhua. *Deep China. The Moral Life of the Person, What Anthropology and Psychiatry Tell Us about China Today*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2011, pp. 322. ISBN 978-0-520-26945-3 (paperback), $29.95, £19.95

A great number of books on contemporary China, written by leading Chinese and Western specialists, are published every year around the world, meeting the demands of the recent 'boom' of Contemporary China studies. However, this book without a doubt is an outstanding and very timely book among the current writing on Post-Maoist China. At least four features makes this book distinguishable: 1) its peculiar disciplinary approach (medical anthropology and cultural psychiatry), 2) subtle subject matters (the hidden spheres of the personal, emotional, moral life and social practice), 3) the multiplicity of the perspectives in discussing the 'remaking of the moral person' (from the general landscape of the transformation and change of traditional morality and perceptions of moral crisis, to the perspective of sexual desire, the practice of voluntary blood donation, urban spatial hierarchy and gentrification, mental and emotional diseases, family politics and social stigmatization—the perspective of 'non-persons'), 4) the main focus of the researchers on the 'self' in post-Maoist China as 'the divided self' (between the past and present, public and private, moral and immoral) rather than a single or uniform entity. As it is remarked in the Introduction, in most anthropologic and sinologist writings, the 'self' is usually presented and conventionally discussed as changing from the 'collective self' to the 'individual self', or from 'ascetic' self to the 'enterprising self', 'desiring self' (p. 3–4). Such treatment of selfhood 'is quite out of step with depth psychology, psychodynamic psychiatry, and a vast terrain of modernist literature and the arts that present the self as torn between self-interest and collective good, struggling over desire and responsibility, negotiating contradictory emotions, shifting attention between things in and out of awareness, and juxtaposing imagination and practical action' (p. 5).

This is what has been happening in recent years in the deep spheres of hundreds of millions of Chinese people, in their daily emotional and moral life, or in what the authors of this book call a *Deep China*. However, it is often silenced or obstructed by more popular studies of the changing market, the economy, and social and government policies. Such studies, which are dominant in the vast sea of literature on contemporary

China, rather distort the image of the real China, since they constitute 'the surface of a changing China' (p. 2–3). This observation provokes the collective aim of the contributors of this book, a group of social anthropologists and psychiatrists, to take 'a closer look at one facet of this deep China: the remaking of the person in China's changing emotional and moral context since the 1980s' (p. 3), in order to deepen the superficial, simplified and one-sided knowledge of contemporary China and the Chinese, and to gain 'a better understanding of the Chinese self and what it implies for getting at the new China' (p. 10).

The problems of the 'divided self' and dual morality are discussed extensively in the opening article on the changing moral landscape in Post-Maoist China, written by Yunxiang Yan, who is one of the leading specialists in social relationships and the problems of the individual in 20th century China. He describes that the most important trajectory in the change of the individuals' inner life is 'a shift away from an authoritarian, collective ethics of responsibilities and self-sacrifice towards a new, optional, and individualistic ethics of rights and self-development'; accompanied by the rise of a new ethical discourse that favours the individual (p. 40). However, he suggests viewing this process not as a mere replacement of the old morality by a new one, but rather as a coexistence of both. Such coexistence results in the contradiction and a 'gap between the Communist ethical discourse and the people's actual moral practices' (p. 42), various sorts of immoral behaviours, confusion of different values and behavioural norms, and conflicts in moral practice, which are often called in a heated public debates simply as moral 'crisis' or 'vacuum'.

The article makes an important contribution by emphasizing a methodological question about the perception of this moral crisis, or the evaluative perspectives. As Yunxiang Yan remarks, 'the judgment on each specific change brought about by this moral shift to a great extent depends on the perspectives of different individuals: where some see moral decline and crisis, others may find the rise of a new ethics' (p. 47–8). He suggests to avoid the common mistake in any generalization about those changes and instead, to take into account the specifics of the temporal, spatial and social contexts, such as the generation, gender and other 'parameters' of those involved in the discussion. He also suggests to keep in mind one universal tendency in the debates on contemporary morality, found in China as well as elsewhere—the idealization of the past, which is usually used by the elder generation 'to critique unsatisfying aspects of the present' (p. 49). The author presents many examples of conflicting trends in moral practices, which stem out of the coexistence of traditional and new ('individualistic') moral arguments, thus coming to the conclusion that 'moral changes in the post-Mao era are certainly not unidirectional or one dimensional' (p. 54). In his opinion, the individuals today 'apply different moral logics that seem to be the most appropriate to

a given case in a particular time' (p. 54). For example, they try to justify the pursuit of their self-interests and particular behaviour, which can coexist paradoxically with such new trends as philanthropic activities and compassion toward strangers. This is why it is often difficult to make the clear distinctions between individualistic and altruistic behaviour of some Chinese youth, or to view its morality in a simplified and generalized way.

Those methodological insights seem very valuable for the studies of contemporary China and a deeper understanding of its society. They are further extended and illustrated by another contributor to this book, Wu Fei, in his chapter 'Suicide, a Modern Problem in China'. Wu Fei discusses the main traditional and some contemporary types (or reasons) for suicide in post-Maoist China and their causes, such as conjugal conflicts, filial piety, the relationships of in-laws, mental disorder, parental biases, sexual or psychological problems, poverty and serious disease. As he demonstrates by his insightful analysis, one of the traditional and very common types of suicide—filial piety—today often results not from the lack of filial piety of children, but rather from the different understanding of the meaning of filial piety between two generations, parents and their children, or elders and the younger generation, as well as from misunderstood expectations of the parents by their children (in the cases when the parent commits suicide). Wu Fei considers such suicides of parents or parents-in-law, resulting from their dissatisfaction with the respect and care received from their children or daughters-in-law, not only 'a tragedy of generational change' (p. 221), but also the 'consequences of incomplete modernity' (p. 224).

What he calls 'incomplete modernity' is the 'divided' condition of the family, as constituting 'neither traditional nor modern, but something unstably-in-between' (p. 224). It is the inability of traditional morality to rebuild itself in a modern world, when, for example, the new freedom to love, to express or fulfil one's individual interests is 'not accompanied by a parallel transformation in family relations that represents the full modernization of the family as is seen in Western societies' (p. 220). However, the author doesn't detail how he understands such transformation, or whether in its cultural-historical context, it is meaningful and possible for Chinese society. He just remarks in general terms, that '[C]hina has become quite modernized; on the other hand, Chinese modernization is accompanied by profound moral conflicts and emotional struggles, which make people in modern China unable to feel at home or content. The more modernized China is—in technological, institutional, and economic ways—the sharper such conflicts become. In order to make modern Chinese civilization more comfortable and less conflicted, China needs to complete the modernization at the level of relationships, subjectivity, and moral experience' (p. 215).

A second important argument in this chapter is that the most important cause of suicide in contemporary China is family politics. It is related closely to the moral politics (the issues of respect and responsibility) as well as emotional life (attachment, expectations and disillusions), and results from trivial things. Those trivial things (family conflicts and misunderstandings) as the causes of suicide actually constitute the deep and serious issues of individual emotional experience and social relationships in modern China, revealing its changes from the most subtle, daily, and at the same time dramatic perspective. The article from its peculiar perspective of family politics contributes to the main argument of the book about the cardinal importance of the daily and intimate matters of individual life for the understanding of contemporary China.

Suicide in post-Maoist China is often related to depression, especially as viewed by psychologists and psychotherapists. However, their relation, as Sing Lee shows in his revealing article, 'Depression. Coming of Age in China', was that in the 20th century, depression in China is far more complicated than in the United States and other Western countries. He starts his investigation from a paradox, which I would reformulate as a question for the investigation: why is it that in China until the early 1990s, depression was 35 times less common than in the United States (p. 177)? (keeping in mind the fact, that the historical and social climate in the United States was far less dramatic than in China at this time). And why is this outburst of depression (or the proliferation of its diagnosis) in China found only in the post-Maoist period (which because of successful economic reforms and the improvement of material life brought evidently 'brighter' experiences and psychological moods, such as happiness, pleasure, the satisfaction of individual desires and interests)? The answers could be found in at least three changes discussed in the article: first, the change of the party-state's (or officially accepted) view of emotions; namely, the move from their suppression and control in the Maoist era to their unleashing or 'liberalization' in the post-Maoist era; second, the move from the negation of individual life, of problems and interests in Maoist era to their valuation in post-Maoist China; and third, the transformation of the officially regulated diagnosis of mental disease from the generic term of 'neurasthenia' (*shenjing shuairuo*) to the Western term of 'depression'.

However, the spread of depression in China, as Lee shows, lies not only in the dramatic reconfiguration of the material and emotional experience—facilitated by Maoist party-state's politics, economic and social changes. It is no less influenced by the change of the medical ethics of psychiatry and psychology, or the inner division of the doctors between their professional duties (to make a right diagnosis of the disease and to treat the patient accordingly) and material—economic interests (to gain as much material profit from the treatment as possible). It is exactly here, where the answer lies to the first question or solution to the paradox mentioned above: the transformation

of nonmedical problems into a disease, resulting into the 'commercialization of depression' (p. 192), formed through the medicalisation of traumas, moral and social problems, and suicide. Thus, besides increased emotional self-expression, the openness to express problems of the inner individual life, and the division of subjectivity, an equally important reason for the 'booming' of depression in contemporary China is the growing interest of mental health clinicians, psychiatric research, and especially pharmaceutical companies to gain a profit from this disease. Although, as Lee shows, this is a part of the global process, or maybe exactly because of this fact, he indirectly suggests to view any statistics of depression in China and especially the statement, that 'China is one of the most depressed countries in the world today', with great suspicion. The material interests of new markets and powers in fact distort considerably the real picture of the mental condition of the Chinese people. This article, with such warnings, seems very valuable for a better understanding of the problems concerning mental health as well as its context in contemporary China.

The division of the 'self' between self-interest and the concern for others among common Chinese people is evident in another sphere; namely, blood donation, which is discussed by Jing Jun in his chapter 'From Commodity of Death to Gift of Life'. The author views this division of the self from the perspective of giving blood versus selling blood, trying to explain, why, as he remarks, 'until 1998, China relied on compulsory and paid blood supplies' (p. 99). Jing Jun sees the main reasons this practice of paid blood dominates are due to the traditional Chinese views of the human body as well as the disastrous policy decisions and morality of China's government authorities, which are extensively discussed in the article. The change of such politics and public moral practice from the pursuit of individual financial gain to one of social compassion and volunteerism began only after the AIDS outbreak in central China—the most dramatic result of the blood market, which, according to the author, transformed human blood from a potential gift of life to a commodity of death. Jing Jun believes that China has many possibilities to rely on voluntary donations of blood and through them to perform acts of altruism, which challenges traditional and Maoist public and individual morality. However, this new moral practice of social compassion and volunteerism has to meet its own challenges, the individualistic and highly competitive market economy, which deepens the division of the moral self in Post-Maoist China.

The AIDS problem in contemporary China involves not only the issues of self-interested morality and death, but also issues of social stigma, which help to gain a particular and more intimate view of individuals and their social networks in contemporary China. This issue is addressed in two articles, although from different perspectives. The first: 'Place Attachment, Communal Memory, and the Moral

Underpinnings of Gentrification in Post-reform Shanghai' by Pan Tianshu. He accounts for the process of self-making and moral hierarchy from the perspective of locality-based identity—in this case, the renewed emphasis on the opposition between the upper (International Settlement) and lower (urban slums) quarters in Shanghai's ongoing transformation of its geographical and social spaces. In his article, based on the ethnographic research and field observations of different urban communities, the author argues that such binary opposition 'has furthered a pre-existing discourse on how cultural and moral personhoods can be identified, differentiated, and judged on the basis of spatial hierarchy', or the segregation of moral worlds, which correspond to 'different and unequal kinds of morality and citizenship' and help to articulate one's socioeconomic position and moral status in society (p. 156–7). The most valuable contribution from this chapter to the general topics and problems of the book is the author's argument that the persistence of such a dichotomy and the moral and social stigma attached to a particular locality by local governments coexist with the recent projects to build a 'civilized community' and cosmopolitan citizenship in post-reform Shanghai, which again furthers the division between local and global self-awareness.

However, far more dramatic is the social stigma of persons with AIDS and mental illness, which is discussed by Guo Jinhua and Arthur Kleinman in their chapter 'Stigma: HIV/AIDS, Mental Illness, and China's Nonpersons'. The authors claim that due to the traditional importance of social networks and collectivistic (family oriented) modes of social life with a strong moral reasoning of social obligations, such stigmatized persons acquire the status of 'non-persons', thus involving the stigmatization of the persons who are connected with a person who bears a stigma. They come to the conclusion that 'stigma is neither a problem of the stigmatized nor a problem of stigmatisers; instead, it is a problem of the whole of society'. In their words, 'stigma shows us what really matters in Chinese society today is security'—the individual as well as societal (p. 257). This is why Guo and Kleinman view the rise of individualistic values and morality as 'a double-edged sword' in the solution of its problem, thus complicating or dividing the moral behaviour of a person as well.

On the other hand, one of the main sources of HIV/AIDS in China is considered to be sexual deviance, which accordingly could be traced to so-called 'sexual revolution'. This topic is discussed by Everett Yuehong Zhang in his chapter 'China's Sexual revolution', viewing the change in sexuality as one of the most significant changes in Post-Maoist China. The author reveals the emergence of a new experiential awareness of subjective sexual identity and morality, detecting it from a number of examples, such as the acceptance of self-interested pursuits and the expression of personal desires in literature and other media, the emergence of the 'epidemic of male impotence' with its various treatments, women's heightened awareness of their sexual

desires and pleasures, the increasing tolerance of homosexuality, the rise of the sex industry, the increase in sexual intimacy in dating, conjugal love and premarital sex, the re-emergence of romantic love and the emergence of 'sexual love' (*xing'ai*) as an unintended consequence of the one child policy, the separation of sexual pleasure from reproduction, the emergence of a new subjectivities, and finally, the search of a proper place for Chinese sexuality in the transnational scholarly field. However, the author avoids giving a clear answer to his main question, related to the main topics of the book, namely, 'whether or not the increasing importance and prominence of sexual life in post-Mao China contributed to the well-being and happiness of the Chinese people' (p. 108). He rather suggests to us not to 'underestimate the significance of justifying sexual desire on its own terms, not the freedom gained from delinking sexual desire from reproduction' and thus to view its mapping and practice as uneven (p. 145), since the pursuit of sexual pleasure often coexists in China, as elsewhere in the world, with sexual abuse, violence against sex workers and an overwhelming pressure on sexual minorities, as well as a new form of 'a regime of sexual health' and the state's power in the form of the one-child policy.

In conclusion, *Deep China* is not a simple collection of individual articles, but rather a result of the fruitful collaboration of all its contributors. Every article extends from a different perspective and leads the topic and discussion to another direction, to another particular article in this volume, and all articles are interconnected in one way or another. Moreover, all the contributors were unified in their investigation by the idea about the 'emergence of a new and original Chinese bourgeois culture that centres itself on the outer and interior furnishings of a new Chinese self', which, as they believe, forms 'one of the great historical pivots of Chinese society' (p. 30). What seems the most important and most valuable insight of this book is the claim that 'Chinese lifestyles and values are more diverse and pluralistic than the state often articulates' (p. 25). As Arthur Kleinman shows in his concluding chapter 'Quest for Meaning', all life practices and experiences in post-Maoist China are concentrated on the quest for happiness, which for the Chinese forms the core of the meaning of their life—moral, emotional, physical, individual as well as communal. This quest, as a common narrative and a story of ordinary Chinese, helps us to better understand not only the general acceptance of the current political reality, but also the rethinking of selfishness, justice, respect, the women's place in society, together with the growth of altruistic ideas and global philanthropic practices, or 'the quest to do good in the world' (p. 282).

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