

The present series represents only a portion of Professor Jin's collection, which he has been acquiring for over a decade. Like his late Qing predecessors, he has wasted no chances and spared no pains in order to gather and bring back to China lost editions and rare texts. Such an act of collecting is in keeping with the aspirations of Sima Guang, as noted above. Professor Jin merits special recognition for his collection, which is the largest since the publication of Hayashi Jussai's 林述齋 (1768–1841) *Itsuzonsho* 逸存書 and Yang Shoujing's *Guyi congshu* 古逸叢書. The project has been conducted without any official or external sponsorship: it has been funded entirely through personal means. Toil and trouble weave themselves into the legends and histories that are in the background of every acquisition of a book. The toil and the stories count as another kind of treasure for scholars, through whose efforts once-forgotten texts will be handed down to future generations.

Jinhua Chen  
*The University of British Columbia*  
E-mail: [jinhua.chen@ubc.ca](mailto:jinhua.chen@ubc.ca)

Smith, Aminda M., *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes: Reeducation, Resistance, and the People*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013. Series: Asia/Pacific/Perspectives. ISBN 9781442218376. 268pp. \$79.99 (hardback).

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Aminda M. Smith's bold and thought-provoking first book examines the reeducation of China's "dangerous classes" in the 1950s, using the process of thought reform to study how the new party-state answered the following question: "What makes a vast population of heterogeneous individuals into the Chinese People?" (p.11). With an array of primary source materials including government documents from the Beijing Municipal Archive, Smith studies the first thirteen reeducation centers in Beijing, and reveals that this larger question has multiple layers: What was the definition of the "People"? In what way should they be made? Was social transformation to be ideological or economic? How was the process of thought reform, including failures and resistance, to be presented? And, what were the legacies of the 1950s on the rest of the Mao period and into the era of reform? Smith's study, at once social history, political history, and intellectual history, is first and foremost a story of China in the 1950s. The trajectory of Beijing reeducation centers is traced across two major turning points:

a period of post-1949 optimism in which reeducation was inclusive and “consciousness-raising,” followed by recidivism and the incorporation of labor in and after 1953, and finally culminating in the 1957 State Council decision on reeducation through labor, in which “bad elements” were handed over to the organs of public security and thus excluded from the People (pp. 204–6). Though the book’s focus is on the early People’s Republic, Smith makes the case throughout that the way the state answered such questions continued to shape its approach to social transformation.

*Thought Reform and China’s Dangerous Classes* is organized chronologically and thematically, beginning with the pre-1949 intellectual articulation of thought reform, then focusing on the actual experience of reeducation in urban areas, and concluding with two chapters on the consequences of reeducation in practice: labor and finally incarceration. The material is eloquently presented through the stories of individuals—from the beggar-turned-official Han Xiuzhen to the two “Beijing Brothel Tyrants,” and from the resistant prostitute Li Lingyun to the recidivist Zhao Jinghe. At the same time, the book revolves around four main themes: defining the People, reeducation, labor, and thought reform.

The central tension in the reeducation story hinges on how the dangerous classes—vagrants, beggars, prostitutes, and petty thieves—were to be classified. On the one hand, it was argued that they were members of the People: they had been victims of the Old Society, their lack of experience in productive labor was a consequence of the chaos and instability of the past, and their redemption lay in education, thought reform, and participation in the New Society. Smith skillfully reconstructs the origins of the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) framing of the “dangerous classes” from the earliest writings of Li Dazhao and Mao Zedong to the analysis of the “red poor” (*chipin*) in the base areas (p. 36). Though Smith argues that the lumpenproletarians remained deeply ambivalent figures, she stresses that Mao’s theoretical innovation remained a touchstone: “Mao was to remain consistent in his claim that the CCP (theoretically) welcomed into the revolution (almost) anyone who was committed to the Party’s goals. This broad view of the revolutionary masses was made possible entirely by Mao’s belief in ‘the infinite capacity of subjective forces to change objective reality,’ or the power of thought reform to transform *anyone* into a revolutionary. This constituted a theoretical innovation” (p. 29). Cast as both potential members of the People and as latent Enemies, the members of the “dangerous classes” thus walked a fine ideological line; the success or failure of their social reformation had to be made sense of both practically and politically.

The second theme of the book is the reeducation process. Having established that the function of reeducation centers was “consciousness-raising” (p. 30), Smith outlines the actual curriculum in three steps: “initial education, speaking

bitterness, then identification and denunciation of a concrete Enemy” (p. 119). Reeducatees would first begin by studying the tales of models with a small study group, use the technique of “speaking bitterness” (*suku*), later elaborated by the cultivation of “hosts of bitterness” (*kuzhu*), and culminating in a struggle session (pp. 119–26). Overlaid on this description of reeducation in practice is Smith’s argument about the ideals behind the practice. Detractors among the cadres notwithstanding—as exemplified by the unenlightened cadre of the short story “Jinbao’s Mother”—Smith suggests that reeducators did not see themselves as political indoctrinators. On the contrary, they “imagined they were working in accordance with the mass line and empowering the People to discover the truth” (p. 132). And, while reeducation-as-social reform was the dominant narrative in the first few years of the PRC, welcoming reeducatees as victims in need of consciousness-raising, it also produced what Smith calls “its own negative oppressive truth regime” (p. 133). The corollary of the consciousness-raising rhetoric was that resisters had low consciousness, with eventual consequences for their status among the People.

For such recalcitrants there was labor, the third main theme of *Thought Reform and China’s Dangerous Classes*. From the beginning of the Party’s theorizing the dangerous classes, labor and production were central. Beginning in Yan’an, cadres understood *erliuzi* to be nonproducers in need of productive work; through work in reeducation centers one could gain a labor perspective (*laodong guandian*) and see the world from the point of view of a worker (p. 141). Smith suggests that though scholars have long made the link between the idea of labor perspective and China’s forced-labor prison system, previous scholarship has ignored the nuanced development of such association in the 1950s. Her work on the Beijing reeducation centers reveals a gradual transformation. In 1949/1950, reeducation cadres emphasized labor as voluntary, then in 1951, in the context of the Korean War, reeducation was combined with labor all over the country, leading to the official claim that labor would lead to reform. Though Smith locates a turning point in 1953, when labor reform and education were combined, she highlights the fact that this turning point did not exclude education: “total reeducation had always involved *both* consciousness raising and participation in production” (p. 173).

The final theme, which links the previous three and provides the title for the book, is thought reform itself. While the book’s early chapters are devoted to the political and intellectual ideal of thought reform, the process in practice is dogged by the shadow of thought reform’s failure. The use of individuals as positive models suggests the need for such modeling, and the incorporation of recidivism into model narratives also hints at an arduous process. Several years into their experiment in social transformation, reeducation cadres were faced with resistance and recidivism, which they made sense of by identifying

recidivists with a “failure to reform.” As Smith explains, “When reeducators said that ‘a small minority’ continued to resist, that claim did not vitiate their assertion that thought reform transformed ‘the vast majority’; it was a critique, not of the practice of thought reform, but of those that failed to respond to it. Reeducation had two purposes: it transformed individuals into the People, and it sifted the ‘bad elements’ out of that all-important collective” (p. 183). In the arc of the second turning point of Smith’s story, the State Council’s 1957 decision assigned reeducation to the organs of public security; where thought reform failed, incarceration with the Enemies of the People began.

*Thought Reform and China’s Dangerous Classes* is carefully researched and well-written. It successfully combines the difficult tasks of tracing the theoretical origins of an idea and its execution in practice, showing how each strand affects the other. One of Smith’s most important contributions is that she urges scholars to take propaganda seriously. Her book shows how the claims of the state can be examined to uncover how they were prescriptive, how they created truth regimes, and how they were powerful. In her introduction, she argues that “idealism and brutality were always two sides of the very same coin...when reeducators made idealized claims about those [social] experiments and their results, there was far more at stake than political whitewashing. Those claims were powerful, official pronouncements about normalcy and deviance, and they set the standards by which everyone would be judged” (p. 8). Connected to this consideration of ideology on its own terms, another contribution is Smith’s highlighting that what the CCP *thought* it was doing remains crucial. Citing Gail Hershatter and Janet Chen, for example, Smith explains that while the CCP replicated reform methods of previous regimes, they themselves saw their project of social transformation as antithetical to that of their predecessors. Finally, Smith demonstrates the complexity of thought reform’s history, showing how it continued to color the attitudes of the regime (p. 223) and that its ideological frameworks color present-day claims that “thought work” can resolve conflicts for “the vast majority,” and that reeducation will serve the “small number” (p. 229).

Smith’s *Thought Reform* will be of interest to scholars of contemporary China and advanced students of China’s modern history and politics. While access to sources remains a frustration for students of the People’s Republic, Smith demonstrates how a diversity of sources can yet be mustered creatively to ask and answer big questions. Her research may provoke other studies, perhaps ones that might focus on places outside of Beijing, or on comparative evaluations of thought reform in other societies. In her introduction Smith refers to Soviet-style “reforging” projects but does not return to the subject (p. 2). What comparisons or connections, if any, might be drawn with other attempts at social transformation? Finally, the reader may also be curious to know more about the lives of the reeducatees, as we see China’s “dangerous classes” mostly through

the eyes of the state. To be fair, at the outset Smith states that she does not aim to make her subalterns speak, and throughout she interrogates the state's official narratives of individual reeducatees. For more of the voices of the People themselves, we await Smith's next book on petitions in the Mao era.

Denise Y. Ho  
*The Chinese University of Hong Kong*  
E-mail: denise.ho@cuhk.edu.hk

Uspensky, Vladimir L., *Tibetskiy Buddizm v Pekine* (Tibetan Buddhism in Beijing). Saint Petersburg: Saint Petersburg State University, 2011. ISBN 9785915421454. 368pp. 300.00 RUB.  
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The new book by Vladimir Uspensky (alternatively, Uspenskiy), Professor and Chair of the Department of Mongolian and Tibetan Studies, Faculty of Asian and African Studies of Saint Petersburg State University (Russia), deals with various aspects in the history of Tibetan Buddhism in Beijing; the time is mainly the period from the middle seventeenth to the early twentieth century. During the reign of the Qing dynasty, the ruling class, namely Manchu and Mongolian nobility, patronized Tibetan Buddhism. This aspect of Qing history is studied too little in Chinese and foreign works, and Uspensky's book fills this lacuna. One can see that the author successfully achieved his aim, as he has drawn a vivid picture of institutions and cultural activity among Tibetan Buddhists in Beijing.

Uspensky argues that the seventeenth century marks the beginning of Beijing as the major center of Tibetan Buddhism, especially due to its numerous Mongolian followers (p. 125). He demonstrates that the most influential Mongolian lamas sojourned in Beijing, some temporarily and some constantly, so that the elite Mongolian clergy became concentrated in the capital. From the seventeenth century on, the officially-appointed chief administrative lama in Beijing (Mong.: *Jasay blam-a*; Ch.: *zhasake dalama* 札萨克达喇嘛) controlled numerous Tibetan Buddhist temples in the imperial summer residence at Jehol (Ch.: Rehe), the original capital of the Manchus Mukden (Shenyang), Wutai Mountain in Shanxi, Hehehota (Guihuacheng 归化城, modern Huhehaote 呼和浩特), and Dolonnor (Dolun 多伦) in Inner Mongolia (pp. 97–98). Beijing was important not only in an administrative aspect, but it also served the center of composition and printing of the literature of Tibetan Buddhism and manufacturing of works of art.