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From Subject to Citizen

Changing Meanings of Citizenship in Modern China. Edited by Merle Goldman and Elizabeth J. Perry.

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The social sciences have studied nationalism, liberalism, democracy, and communism in modern China. We have asked questions about legitimacy, hegemony, resistance, revolution, and even "discursive structures." Why, then, study "citizenship"? Goldman and Perry begin this volume of essays on citizenship in China in the twentieth century with reference to the post-1989 reforms in Europe. "Dramatic changes in political sovereignty led quite naturally to a reexamination of the fundamental meanings of citizenship" (p. 1). China can offer important comparative insights, they suggest. I would go further. Citizenship emerges as a central issue in societies that must define membership in the political community in the absence of a clear sovereign-subject relationship. That is, in the absence of a quasi-personal and certainly hierarchical relationship with the king. This may have occurred in Athens in the sixth century BCE, in northwestern Europe and North America in the eighteenth century, and China in the twentieth century—and in other places at other times. I am not arguing for a teleology "from subject to citizen," nor would I deny the distinction is largely heuristic (the Roman Empire operated with

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legally-defined citizens, and citizenship was developing under the eighteenth century British monarchy)—but neither can we speak of "citizenship" in every political and social context. As the editors suggest, citizenship is not limited to democracies, but it is not universal either. Few would assert that the Mayan Empire had citizens, and I doubt a notion of citizenship can be found in Qing China until the dynasty was near its end.

In any case, we must study citizenship in China because of its place on the political agenda of Chinese themselves, in several guises (國民、公民、市民), beginning in the 1890s and continuing through today. At the same time, citizenship reemerged as a specific concern in the West in the late twentieth century for several reasons, including the newly visible weakness of the nation-state in an era of capitalist globalization. The nature and importance of the only political community most of us have even known came under challenge, and now citizenship itself seems threatened (for all the celebrations of 1989 in Europe and the former Soviet Union). Conversely, efforts are being made to expand the concept (e.g., European citizenship, global citizenship, pan-Arabism, aborigine "first peoples" citizenship), with results yet to be known. Within the academic community, earlier ways of studying political forms were encountering theoretical and practical problems. How study state-society relations if neither "state" nor "society" were stable concepts?[1] Scholars turned their back on "classes," muttered imprecations against a "civil society" that seemed teleologically linked to democracy, and suddenly found that "resistance" and "hegemony" were too ubiquitous to be analytically useful. *Citizenship*, on the other hand, sounded well in a variety of political contexts, not only liberal democracies; as well, even where liberal-democracy was but a chimera, "citizens" could even absorb the flavor of the new individualist-consumer, so well captured by the iron fist of rational choice theory. In other words, the turn to

1 Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and their Critics," *American Political Science Review* 85:1 (March 1991), pp. 77-96; George Steinmetz, ed., *State/Culture: State-Formation after the Cultural Turn* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

citizenship was probably over-determined for both good and bad reasons.

The China case has received relatively little attention, though the situation is now changing.[2] Based on a conference held at Harvard University in 1999, this volume is essentially divided among five essays on the late Qing and the Republican period, eight on the People's Republic since the 1980s, and one on Taiwan. The editors and the press deserve congratulations for getting high-quality scholarship into print so quickly—though the lack of an index is inexcusable. Overall, the authors are sensitive to the discourse of citizenship, which can be analyzed with the tools of intellectual and cultural history, and also to concrete social forms and movements, analyzed as social and political history. This review will concentrate on the first five essays—the historical part as it were—and deal with only a few of the essays in the latter section on contemporary China. Finally, this review will consider with some general problems facing attempts to discuss citizenship in China.

Sprouts of citizenship (1900-1930)

There is no doubt of the centrality of citizenship to late Qing and Republican political discourse.[3] It was not an abstract question but a lived experience, at least for many urbanites. In associations like chambers of commerce, in public gatherings

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2 R. Bin Wong, "Citizenship in Chinese History," in Michael Hanagan and Charles Tilly, eds., *Extending Citizenship, Reconfiguring States* (Lanham, MD: Roman & Littlefield, 1999), pp. 97-122, offers an overview; see also Joshua A. Fogel and Peter Zarrow, eds., *Imaging the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890-1920* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1997). The link between urban modernity, state rituals, and citizenship is very usefully explored in Henrietta Harrison, *The Marking of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911-1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

3 In this sense, though citizenship is conceptually related to the much-debated "civil society" issue, it may prove less controversial. A convenient route into the civil society debates, is the symposium "'Public Sphere/Civil Society' in China?" *Modern China* 19:2 (April 1993); I have summarized the debate in "The Origins of Modern Chinese Concepts of Privacy: Notes on Social Structure and Moral Discourse," in Bonnie S. McDougall and Anders Hansson, eds., *Chinese Conceptions of Privacy* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 122-129.

like political rallies, in anti-imperialist movements, and among those making new group-claims like workers and women: citizenship was both a goal and a mode of representation. Yet a sense of failure and perhaps even tragedy haunts the articles dealing with citizenship in China's early twentieth century. This is due not only to the implicit linkage of citizenship projects to democracy (regardless the editors' attempt to deny teleology), but also to the very notion (still implicit) of citizenship as an ideal that was attacked by the Nationalists and smothered by the Communists. (Whether the notions of citizenship's premature death in China is accurate will be discussed in the conclusion below.)

In Bryna Goodman's theoretically and empirically rich study of associations in Shanghai in the 1920s, for example, she emphasizes their weak position vis-à-vis the state, whether the authority of the International Settlement's foreign rulers or of Chinese officials. At the same time, associations like the Chamber of Commerce and the Rate-Payers' Association did become more democratic and attuned to the demands of citizens. Internally, they claimed to practice democratic governance; externally, they claimed to represent the public. Such claims can be viewed skeptically, but Goodman points out that as part of the rhetoric of the period they influenced daily practice. Factional fighting within organizations, struggles between organizations, and organizations' participation in "movements" against tax increases or in anti-Japanese boycotts all involved legitimation through elections and publicity. Even if associations remained far from democratic, and "reformers" failed to live up to their ideals, a kind of populist rhetoric purported to represent even those who were not members of associations. Factional debates were reported in the press and associations spread their ideas through easy-to-read pamphlets. As Goodman notes, "Inability to maintain unity and to successfully discipline dissent—despite the will to repress it—was what distinguished May Fourth era associations from those of either the late Qing or the imminent period of party-dominated politics" (p. 96).

Shanghai thus saw the emergence of a strange kind of citizenship, one implying membership in non-political but very public communities. Since association

reformers tended to favor increased charity and support for schools, they claimed to represent the poor generally, not just association members. Goodman also notes that, "the floating democratic rhetoric of equality found cultural anchors in older Chinese notions of hierarchy, community, and benevolence..." (p. 97). The poor were not expected to represent themselves, yet the era saw a shift in a vision of citizenship as more egalitarian and inclusive. A new bourgeois elite legitimated itself not through its wealth but by its modernity; legitimate groups then might include small shopkeepers and even labor (but not women).

The point, for Goodman, is not that Chinese aimed at democracy but missed; nor that they might simply have never understood "democracy." Democracy as understood in Western terms that highlighted universal citizens (who transcend class and occupational ties) and clearly-defined representative bodies was not "translatable" into the Chinese context. The "citizens' rights movement" (市民運動) was constituted by a collective and unified citizenry, not competing individuals. But this did not prevent a creative process of institution-building. "If the concepts of democracy and citizenship with which Shanghai residents wrestled in this period were undeniably Western imports, the practices through which they became material cannot be properly understood either as purely derivative or as reflecting a poor ability to comprehend the foreign model" (p. 105). Yes, but what brought these practices to an end, if they did end?[4]

Shanghai's Western rulers were anything but models of democracy, as Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom points out. Thus the International Settlement could hardly have provided would-be Chinese democrats with any useful lessons. For all of the economic and cultural modernity of Shanghai, it was not politically modern, because

4 Given the theoretical sophistication of Goodman's argument, it is unfortunate she did not specifically pursue the notion of citizenship as opposed to democracy. Granted, they are closely related, but if citizenship was largely "collective," as she claims, what does this mean for notions of representation and rights? And if citizenship was seen as a matter of social welfare as well as political reform, what does this mean for questions like national identity?

it operated nothing like the quintessential form of modern political organization, the nation-state. Wasserstrom "measures" participation in public life ("citizenship") in terms of parks and politics. Chinese were excluded, especially before some reform in 1928, from both. Wasserstrom suggests that democracy was stunted in China not only because of Confucian and/or Leninist authoritarianism—the usual explanations—but because of "the distorted image of the Enlightenment" provided by Western businessmen and diplomats who believed that Chinese could only be governed by an elite until their cultural level was improved. One might ask if this were a distorted or a true picture of Enlightenment values, but the more interesting challenge is to prove that political practices in the International Settlement actually created images that Chinese wanted to copy. Shanghai offered an example of colonial practice—perhaps of "colonial modernity"—and it is at least conceivable that this might be compatible with some form of citizenship.

Semi-colonial citizenship seems to me to be exactly what Goodman is exploring, though Wasserstrom assumes it cannot exist. Still, Wasserstrom is absolutely right to deconstruct the "'Model Settlement' mystique" (p. 114) of Shanghai as an example of civic virtues that the Chinese should have copied.[5] He notes that Chinese like Sun Yat-sen, Cai Hesen, and many more moderate men not only linked prohibitions of Chinese access to public parks with the injustices of imperialism, but also understood the issue in terms of citizenship, linking it to self-government, taxation, and "equality." But he concludes that in spite of some emphasis on rights, discussions of parks and voting by and large did not raise the issues found in Western discussions of citizenship. Many bourgeois Chinese were most offended at being excluded while lower-class Westerners (sailors and worse) were allowed in the parks; they did not

[5] The treaty ports, which actively deprived Chinese of rights, could scarcely represent "a great liberal road not taken" (p. 128)—a view Wasserstrom traces to John King Fairbank and Lucian Pye. See John K. Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964); Lucian Pye, "How China's Nationalism was Shanghaied," in Jon Unger, ed., *Chinese Nationalism* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1996), pp. 86-112.

object when, after 1928, parks were open to Chinese but admission fees were charged. In this sense, they accepted the image of Shanghai as a kind of transnational place, and perhaps saw citizenship as municipal as well as national. Like Goodman, Wasserstrom emphasizes that citizenship was understood in corporate rather than individual terms.[6]

This seems correct, although Wasserstrom seems to conflate modernity and democracy (and citizenship) as if they were the same. He thus runs against the gauntlet of decades of suggestions that Shanghai provides the key to Chinese modernity.[7] However, even granting that "modern citizenship" and the International Settlement context were a poor fit (p. 127), is the problem that Shanghai was insufficiently modern? Surely the problem is not modernity but more specifically the (lack of) political values that Wasserstrom associates with the Enlightenment. Yet here I'm not sure the central problem is either Confucian paternalism or Leninist vanguardism but how notions of citizenship and democracy derived from Western *texts* could be worked out in Chinese *practices*. I doubt that Chinese failed to learn the virtues of democracy because Shanghai's authorities were bad teachers (though of course they were). Rather, Chinese made use of notions of citizenship and democracy in the course of complex political struggles in ways that simultaneously "empowered" and limited them.

If the fees charged by parks were high enough to deprive workers of access to this real and symbolic public space—a space of citizenship—nonetheless they made a space of citizenship for themselves on the streets. Elizabeth Perry's article reviews briefly the upsurges of workers' movements in 1919, 1925, 1926-27, and again in

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6 Also see Henrietta Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen: Political Ceremonies and Symbols in China, 1911-1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

7 If this is not his opinion but his characterization of a common view, the question needs clarification. The argument that Shanghai = modernity = democratic citizenship is of course exactly what Wasserstrom wishes (correctly) to refute. A recent work claiming a generalized modernity for Shanghai is Leo Ou-fan Lee's study of the culture industry, *Shanghai Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

1966.[8] She points out that when workers joined demonstrations in the twentieth century, they did so as citizens, not merely as workers, and pressed political claims, not merely economic claims. Again, Shanghai is key to her argument. When workers there joined the May Fourth movement in 1919 or the May Thirtieth movement of 1925 they knew their actions—not a simple labor strike but part of a general strike—let them "take their newfound place as citizens alongside other sectors of urban society" (p. 135).

In the Three Armed Uprisings of 1926-1927, less familiar to Western scholars since less focused on anti-imperialism, the goal was nothing less than a new political order, an order that would grant workers full citizenship. Self-consciously trying to create a Shanghai "Paris Commune," workers led a struggle not against capitalists but against the state. With other citizens they demanded municipal autonomy from the warlords and foreigners. Many of their objectives were achieved, Perry notes, including the elections of various representative bodies, before they were smashed by Chiang Kai-shek in April 1927. Again, we are left with a sense of failure.

Similarly, too, with modes and spaces of what we might call citizenship-work. David Strand's innovative article on public speaking in the late Qing and early Republic argues that ideas about—and claims to—citizenship were worked out in public forums. Political speeches, protest meetings, and lecture tours brought elites and (urban) populaces together in ways that raised possibilities for contention. A new "political aesthetics" centering around the need to sway popular opinion suggested that "citizens" were those who spoke and quite possibly those who listened as well. The radical edge lay in the possibility of anyone becoming a speaker and the audience turning into rebel masses. Traditional Chinese rhetoric was largely devoted to convincing the king, but a new interest in public speaking and debates dealt with how to use logic and emotion to convince the crowd. For radicals,

8 For details, see Elizabeth Perry, *Shanghai on Strike* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993); Elizabeth Perry and Li Xun, *Proletarian Power: Shanghai in the Cultural Revolution* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

speaking offered a chance to reach the illiterate. Citizenship was a work in progress, and the Guomindang's electoral success in 1913 owed much to Song Jiaoren's speaking tours.

Strand further suggests that the "movements" (May Fourth, May Thirtieth, and others) of the 1920s, contributed to the concreteness of the nation as leaders faced their followers. Their interactions were both real and symbolic. Yet of course we know that whatever happened to citizenship, public speaking was increasingly restricted under the Nationalists and the Communists. Audiences became passive receptacles. It seems that political speech became terminally ritualized, culminating in the "speak bitterness" complaint and the cadre report. Strand is surely right about this, but is he suggesting a kind of teleology of citizenship here? The story of public speaking sounds like the old story of Chinese liberalism, cut off at the shoots after initially promising growth. Strand suggests that political speech always contains some seeds of resistance that, given the slightest opportunity may sprout, as seen in the Cultural Revolution and the post-Mao period. Yet citizenship and public speaking might be seen to have shared the same fate as the boisterous 1920s faded into the darker 1930s.

Women, too, failed to become full-fledged citizens. Joan Judge argues that in mainstream late Qing discourse, women were something less than full-fledged citizens, though they were being drawn into the political community in new ways. Three broad groups of elites proposed different roles for women: conservatives favored "good wives and wise mothers" while moderate reformers spoke of "mothers of citizens" and radicals advocated "women citizens." The reformers' views dominated the period, linking women's political roles to their biological/family function, but at least encouraged women's education, as well as physical fitness and patriotism. However, Judge's conclusion that female citizenship was defined by "cultural and political elites from above" (p. 42) rather than claims from below seems unnecessarily narrow. If a view of women's citizenship as expressed primarily in the domestic sphere was hegemonic—Judge's main sources are girls'

textbooks—more radical voices also contributed to ongoing public debates in which women themselves increasingly took part. It was not merely that official discourse "opened up" new space for women to assert their own notions of citizenship, but that such assertions helped define evolving elite views.[9] As Judge correctly asserts, the emphasis was more on duties than rights, and contributions to the nation rather than free participation in the political sphere—but something like this was also the case for elite views of male citizens as well.

Like Judge, Strand finds women a key to the Chinese problem with citizenship. Denied suffrage even by the revolutionary movement they had supported, radical women spoke out, invading the precincts of, for example, the Guomindang's inaugural meeting in Beijing in August 1912. Strand notes, "a woman at the podium was both a logical extension of republican politics and citizenship and provocative to the point of riot" (p. 64).

Perhaps we can conclude that citizenship in the 1910s and 1920s came in different degrees and kinds. No author considers the possibility of citizenship in the countryside, perhaps because it never occurred to Chinese of the day. Rather, contesting claims to membership in a political community (or various political communities marked by municipal identity, free association, or the nation itself) with attendant rights and duties were fought on a daily basis. The paragon of citizenship, at least in his own eyes, was the bourgeois paterfamilias; students, soldiers, and women made claims that were both competing and compatible. Political realities destabilized the meaning of citizenship. And the Nationalists brought open contention to an end with unification. As early as 1929 the new Nanjing government stipulated that during the period of political tutelage, "The people of the Republic of China must obey and support the Guomindang and swear fealty to the Three People's Principles...before they may exercise the rights of citizens of the Republic of

9 Cf. Rebecca E. Karl, "'Slavery,' Citizenship, and Gender in Late Qing China's Global Context," in Rebecca E. Karl and Peter Zarrow, eds., *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural Change in Late Qing China* (Cambridge, MA: HUAC, Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 212-244.

China."[10] Since few articles in this book touch upon the decades between the 1930s and 1970s, it might seem that darkness descended on the project of Chinese citizenship.

The second sprouting of citizenship (1976-)

Once we arrive at the happy moment of Mao's death, in most accounts of modern China, the earlier sprouts of citizenship re-sprout, albeit tentatively.[11] We might thus assume that citizenship was irrelevant to China's Maoist years, even though the editors assured us it was not limited to democracies. The one author to take the possibility of a kind of Maoist citizenship seriously is Elizabeth Perry. This was, of course, not the citizenship of autonomous, rights-bearing individuals but of political demands based on group identity. Perry notes, briefly, that in the Cultural Revolution, we again saw widespread worker actions. Again the language and model of the Paris Commune had an intoxicating influence, and workers proved pivotal to the collapse of the existing CCP in Shanghai in 1966. Workers achieved a degree of power in many cities—but "despite these developments, there is little evidence that rebels in Shanghai or elsewhere used their newfound authority to advance the interests of workers *as workers*. Theirs was a quest for political inclusion..." (p. 149). And again the period of radical experimentation was very

10 《中國國民黨第一二三四次全國代表大會彙刊》（中國國民黨中央執行委員會宣傳委員會，1934），頁160 (article 6). On the other hand, the political tutelage period constitutional compact (中華民國訓政時期約法) of 1931 defined citizens more generously (if vaguely) as all nationals (國籍) so defined by law, and also specified various rights and duties. See 張耀曾、岑德彰編，《中華民國憲法史料》（台北：文海出版社，1981），頁1-4。

11 Scholarly studies of the political effects of the Dengist reforms are vast. Works touching on citizenship issues include Victor C. Falkenheim, ed., *Citizens and Groups and Contemporary China* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1987); David Goodman and Beverley Hooper, eds., *China's Quiet Revolution: New Interactions between State and Society* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994); and Dorothy J. Solinger, *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

brief. In 1989, by way of contrast, there was little worker involvement in the student protests in Shanghai, both because of effective government suppression and the failure of the students to reach out to the workers. The successes and failures of 1989 will be further discussed below, but here Perry hints at a counter-intuitive conclusion: at least as far as workers are concerned, the Maoist era presented possibilities of citizenship that the post-Maoist period has rescinded. This suggests that limits to the post-Mao citizenship projects described by other authors of this volume stem as much from the success of capitalism in China as from a malevolent state. In any case, Perry shows clearly that workers created powerful movements when they combined with students and other classes both before and after 1949.

Perry's article suffers from a certain lack of political context—to treat the 1926-27 period with virtually no reference to the Communists or to the National Revolution seems to exaggerate the agency of the workers. Still, Perry usefully suggests that we should look at inter-class mobilization as a form of "civil society" like the more familiar native-place associations, secret societies, workers schools, teahouses, and formal political groupings. The Maoist suppression of workers rested not only on a strong state but specifically on separating intellectuals from workers (except for brief periods in 1957 and 1966-68). Whether workers and intellectuals can find common cause in the twenty-first century remains to be seen.

Yu Xingzhong's probing article about citizenship in contemporary China also discusses the Maoist period, though skeptically. Yu's premise is that since the notion of citizenship was brought into China from the West in the late Qing, "citizenship consciousness" must be fostered before citizenship can become a reality. As seen in the PRC's constitutions (1954, 1975, 1978, 1982), however, "people" (人民) was long preferred to "citizen" (公民). To be a member of the people—primarily, workers and peasants—was to fully belong to China, while landlords, for example, were *merely* citizens, with duties but no rights. Although citizenship was a constitutional category, Mao Zedong's emphasis on enemies of the people (1957: "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People")

negated the value of citizenship. Although the notions of equality before the law and the "four great freedoms" (speak out, air views, great debates, big-character posters) seemed to offer some elements of citizenship, they functioned imperfectly, at best, in a political culture inimical to citizenship. Here, Yu criticizes the gap between leaders and led as inimical to citizenship consciousness. This, "similar to the traditional pattern of the rulers and the ruled...prevented the modern concept of citizen participation from taking hold in China" (p. 295). However, it seems to me that whilst this is plainly true to a degree, we have to acknowledge the role of elites in democratic politics everywhere. The key element in the PRC would thus not be the leaders-led gap but autocratic rule, or a particularly cavernous gap figleafed as the "dictatorship of the proletariat."

In any case, Deng Xiaoping explicitly rejected the four great freedoms as he came to power in the late 1970s. Thus turning to the reform era, Yu notes that as the state has stepped back from parts of the public realm, opportunities to promote civil society and citizenship have arisen. However, he also points out that no provisions have been developed to enforce constitutional norms and warns that increasing inequality is "stratifying" citizenship. In other words, different groups have different de facto rights. As Yu notes, this situation is not unique to China; I would emphasize even more the challenges to ideals of participatory politics—much less social rights—imposed by late capitalism everywhere. Markets and even "well-administered laws" (p. 307) have little to do with citizenship, and Yu may be right to call for a "universalistic and transcendental civil enlightenment." But where is this enlightenment to come from?

The articles dealing with contemporary China might be divided between those that focus on civil society (and consciousness), such as Yu's, and those that focus on groups. The latter include Merle Goldman's study of the demands of post-Mao students and intellectuals to be treated as citizens. She notes that the democracy wall movement of 1978-79 was rooted in the Cultural Revolution's four great freedoms. At any rate, Goldman herself contrasts post-Mao China with the Cultural

Revolution, emphasizing that by 1978 activists had seen the dangers of blindly following a leader and were developing a systematic critique of despotism that was contrasted to notions of citizenship. On the one hand, during the Maoist period, "for a small number, the Cultural Revolution had inadvertently been a school for citizenship" (p. 166); yet on the other, "there was no such thing as political rights" (p. 160). She points out that the democracy movement marked a claim to citizenship by action, not theoretical discussions, seeming to imply that citizenship basically lies in political participation. However, as Mao first provoked and then crushed the Cultural Revolution, so Deng Xiaoping first tolerated and then crushed the democracy movement.

Moving further into the reform era, Bruce Dickson suggests that businessmen are so deeply intertwined with government officials that we can scarcely look to them to promote a notion of rights-bearing citizens. Basing his conclusions on interview-survey data, Dickson sees little differences in the views of officials and private entrepreneurs, though the latter do believe in their own importance and their contributions to the community, if not in their "rights" as such. A problem implicit in the analysis in this and other articles is an assumption that people are only citizens if they protest against the state, or at least clearly demarcate their differences from it. Dickson does suggest that a trend toward political involvement on the part of businessmen could help create future citizenship. But why not analyze contemporary politics—with competing interest groups, fluid state-society relations, and corporatist norms—in terms of (limited) citizenship?

Villagers, too, are becoming more politically involved. Kevin J. O'Brien emphasizes that if villagers do not see themselves as citizens (that is, with specific rights vis-à-vis the state), they certainly see themselves as members of political communities who can rally against corrupt officials and demand, for example, to see the village accounts. The CCP has kept tight control over village elections, which remain highly exclusive. Yet they can sometimes unseat unpopular leaders and play a role in allowing peasants to negotiate with officials. Indeed, O'Brien usefully

suggests that citizenship may be emerging not through state-guaranteed rights but precisely out of the struggles over local issues. Supposedly ignorant villagers have been quick to pick up the contractual discourse of legal regularity and use it against local officials (within the language of loyalty). "Citizenship practices have preceded the appearance of citizenship as a secure, universal recognized status. In fact, practice may be creating status..." (p. 228). If so, as O'Brien says, this is not a citizenship based on the autonomous individual, but one of local collectivities, social and reciprocal in nature.

Another group that has both won and lost from the reforms is women. Margaret Y. K. Woo underlines the paradox that women are citizens insofar as they are defined and protected in law, and have in practice used litigation to press for rights. This is a highly limited citizenship however, and women remain particularly vulnerable. Even if they can use the law to claim certain rights, these must be limited to private matters and specific abuses of power; such claims cannot challenge the government directly or its economic reform program. Yet Woo seems optimistic, arguing that as women in effect develop their own "membership rules," the rhetoric (or even consciousness, in Yu's terms) is shifting from "class" to "rights and duties." The state will need to back this process for it to get very far in the legal system, but out of the state's own recognition of social rights may eventually come a clearer sense of political rights.

Chih-yu Shih considers the role of ethnicity in defining Chinese citizenship, particularly the state's attempt to promote the assimilation of minority groups without marking them as "Han." "This clear demarcation of minorities allows the execution of citizenship projects" (p. 235). Here, Shih seems to be assuming that citizenship is defined by the state, which uses ethnicity to demand patriotic responses from both the Han and specific minority groups (who can be considered former aliens who are no longer alien since assimilation—though not assimilated to the point of becoming Han). From the state's point of view, minorities are an integral part of its promotion of citizenship, according to Shih, and so-called civilizing projects demand that

minorities turn themselves into citizens. But, having examined four cases of minorities policies (one in Taiwan), Shih concludes that civilizing projects inevitably provoke resistance that, in turn, endangers identification with the state or with the Han people. This is a rich and suggestive essay, but Shih's emphasis on the dilemmas of the state's citizenship project blind him to the possibilities of bottom-up efforts to create citizenship both with and against the state—efforts supported by his own data.

While citizenship in China may or may not be sprouting, it would seem to have become fully rooted in Taiwan. Indeed, the case in Taiwan is often used, not least by Taiwanese themselves, to refute charges that something in Chinese culture is inimical to democracy. Shelley Rigger extrapolates from the rapid evolution of political culture, civil society, and law to argue that Taiwan is heading toward a "post-nationalist vision of the state." The opposition movement of the 1970s and 1980s revolved around citizenship demands; these were resolved in a new legal and political framework that redefined citizenship in terms of state membership bringing with it substantive rights. By this time, according to Rigger, Sun Yat-sen's old vision of primordial blood tie—and the Guomindang's old insistence that this included all Chinese—had disintegrated. Modern Taiwanese basically vote as Taiwan-area residents (or, we could simply say in political terms, as Taiwanese), not as Republic of China nationals, even while many continue to root their identity in Chinese roots. Rigger's analysis is convincing up to a point; yet it does not seem to me that Taiwan's failure to claim status as a nation-state (in the eyes of China, the world, and even, perhaps most Taiwanese) that citizenship has replaced national identity as the basis of politics. For one thing, there is no such thing as a nation-state anywhere (that is, in actual fact no state is limited to one "nation" and no "nation" is limited to one state). For another, if "nationalism" in Taiwan is "inauthentic" and misused, again, this seems to be the common fate of nationalism, hardly unique to Taiwan. The real point is that there does exist a Taiwanese national identity, "authentic" or not; it fueled much of the opposition movement, and is flexible enough

to include Taiwanese of various backgrounds even while many do not accept it. Rigger's argument is based on linking territorial and community-based identity with civic nationalism, contrasting this to ethnic nationalism, and then discovering citizenship in the democratization produced by the former. However, crosscutting territorial and ethnic identities is not necessarily in opposition. It may be that Taiwanese national identity, itself a product of international tensions as much as domestic developments, emerges dialectically along with Taiwanese citizenship. The prospect of the twenty-first century producing a truly post-national citizenship anywhere remains remote, and I see little evidence of this happening in Taiwan. At the same time, it is true, citizenship is about demanding benefits from states and meeting their demands, and national identity will never be more than one part of the practice of state membership.

Changing meanings of citizenship

What does an examination of "citizenship" tell us about modern China? What might modern China tell us about "citizenship"? Citizenship, at root, implies a kind of political agency possessed by "citizens" marked by his or her membership in a political community; it is thus a kind of identity opposed, to a degree, to alternative identities of religion, family, or region, and it implies loyalty to the political community and not to a king or god or entirely private selfish goals.[12] In the West, citizenship was an ideology, flourishing in the French Revolution but also in the earlier American Revolution and in the bourgeois and working class struggles of the nineteenth century. In the mid-twentieth century, the sociologist T. H. Marshall famously traced the growth of citizenship through civil to political rights, and he

[12] See Michael Walzer, "Citizenship," in Terence Ball, James Farr, and Russell L. Hanson, eds., *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 210, for some of this.

thought he was seeing its extension to social rights (the welfare state).[13] Several of the authors of this book usefully note that these categories might apply to China in reverse. In other words, the historical trajectory of Chinese citizenship begins with a strong sense of social rights that may have been rooted in Confucian statecraft thinking and was certainly seen in Sun Yat-sen's "three principles of the people" and in the appeal of socialism across most of the twentieth century.[14] In this sense, the Chinese "case" should remind theorists of citizenship of its complexity and flexibility.

It is, of course, arguable that the notion of citizenship emerged out of European history and should not be applied to societies without the distinctive cities and corporate groups (nobles, clergy, burghers) of England, France, and Germany. Yet it seems to me if the concept is to be traced back to its Greek and Roman roots, then it may as well be applied to China. It is extremely useful to do so, and as the editors of this volume imply, non-China scholars would do well to pay some attention to the China case. Obviously, it is self-defeating (though still common) to leave China out of attempts to understand global processes. Even more basically, as Margaret Somers has pointed out, "Citizenship is a 'contested truth'—its meaning is politically and historically constructed."[15] It must be studied in all its local particularity. Citizenship is less an outside measuring stick (a tool of social analysis) and more a club used by citizens themselves; if the Chinese claim to be citizens, then it's citizenship.

In fact, citizenship has been central to the history of modern and contemporary China. Deeply imbedded in the struggles against the monarchy and the ensuing attempts at nation-building, state-building, populist movements were countless attempts to define and enforce the claims, entitlements, rights, duties, and procedures

13 T. H. Marshall, *Citizenship and Social Class* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1950), pp. 3-51.

14 See also R. Bin Wong, "Citizenship in Chinese History," esp. pp. 112-113.

15 Margaret R. Somers, "Rights, Relationality, and Membership: Rethinking the Making and Meaning of Citizenship," *Law and Social Inquiry* 19:1 (winter 1994), p. 65.

among various groups and governments in China. The "citizenship project" was first conceived by nationalist intellectuals by the 1890s and picked up by late Qing officials and reformers. By 1912, new rituals of the nation implied both inclusiveness and egalitarianism, though within limits. As Liah Greenfeld notes, nationalism implies an identity that transcends—partly, anyway—class, kinship, localism, and even ethnicity; this vague egalitarianism or commonality lies at the heart of citizenship.[16] Citizenship need not entail democratic rights (voting, office-holding, and so forth), though these were promoted in China, if abortively, through the 1920s, but rather a demand or entitlement to the protection of the state that might be defined in terms of rights and duties or, in the Chinese case, for moral reciprocity between rulers and ruled. As this volume makes clear, one way or another citizenship was on the minds of Chinese political actors from that time through the 1930s. I would argue it remained central to the Nanjing government and even through the Maoist era. True, Maoist mass movements were inimical to much of what we normally mean by "citizenship." But revolutionary struggle, even if manipulated, also created a space to claim membership in the political community and to make demands on the state and fellow citizens. Indeed, the ideal of civic virtue (or revolutionary purity—devotion to the community in utter disregard to the self) was perhaps central to the Cultural Revolution, at least briefly. The Maoist citizen was a wholly committed one.

The notion of a "Maoist citizen" may ultimately be too self-contradictory to be useful. Still, the failure of this volume generally to consider the possibility implies that China could only build citizenship when the state was weak (c. 1890-1930) or deliberately stepped back from certain social and civil realms (since the late 1970s). But aroused masses led by a dynamic state may be one form citizenship can take. Robert Culp's study of the Guomindang's vision of citizenship is instructive in this

16 Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 1-14.

regard.[17] Although the Guomindang preferred a kind of transcendent society composed of small, sanctioned groups to individual citizens, this very preference demanded not self-abnegation but self-development. Perry's brief examination of workers in the Cultural Revolution suggests not only that the state's authorization of particular groups allows them to press claims, but perhaps that something about the Maoist social vision led them to press citizens' rather than workers' claims.

As noted above, the editors of this volume insist that the term "citizenship" "need not" imply a teleological development toward democracy (pp. 2-3); rather, it highlights the question of membership in the political community (who is included, who excluded) and the "quality of that membership." But it may be the question of quality that lets teleology in the back door. Most of the authors here explicitly or implicitly hold the ideal of liberal democratic political participation as a measuring stick against Chinese realities, and several focus on issues (e.g., public speaking, the Democracy Wall movement, village elections, democratic procedures) that have teleological expectations built into them. The editors themselves suggest that China "shows some signs of change" now, as thinking about "rights" may be evolving along more Western lines. The insistence of several authors that these rights and that democracy itself may be following more "collectivist" lines is a useful caveat against any teleology that would predict a strong regime liberal democracy and individual rights in China's future (which is not to say that either or both are impossible). The point here, however, is that the notion of collective citizenship remains unexplored. Similarly unexplored is the possibility of citizenship based on moral relations among individuals, society, and the state rather than bundles of political, social, and economic rights attached to individuals.

Of course, the various articles in this volume theorize, implicitly or explicitly,

[17] Robert Culp, "Setting the Sheet of Loose Sand: Conceptions of Society and Citizenship in Nanjing Decade Party Doctrine and Civics Textbooks," in Terry Bodenhorn, ed., *Defining Modernity: Guomindang Rhetorics of a New China, 1920-1970* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002), pp. 45-90.

citizenship in different ways. They tend to neglect, for the most part, the communitarian and activist side of citizenship as commitment to the group, but rather underscore the private and passive side of citizenship as the enjoyment of rights. This partly explains the inability to deal with the nature of revolutionary citizenship, yet it seems difficult to understand post-Mao citizenship without an appreciation of how political expectations were shaped over the course of the preceding generation. Clearly, the Maoist "four great freedoms" played a role in shaping conceptions of civil society that emerged in the Dengist era. More basically, even the notion of "the people," though divisive, may have contributed to demands for political participation that exploded in the 1980s. Collective resistance continues throughout China today, particularly on a local basis by those very groups valorized in the Maoist period: farmers and workers (and minorities). Unfortunately, none of the articles in this book fully explores the ironies of post-Maoist citizenship. As the formerly low were raised and the high, sometimes, cast down, we need to pose questions not just about economic winners and losers, but about the different conditions underlying the struggle for citizenship. Many workers may be fighting to regain a kind of citizenship status they have lost as new capitalist institutions have developed; to a degree, this might be true of women as well. The kind of entrepreneurs and businessmen discussed by Bruce Dickson, however, have gained in status while intellectuals (not discussed in this volume) also claim a certain freedom of action.

Here, again, China is hardly an isolated case at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Any discussion of citizenship in China should take account of the forces of local and global capitalism (markets and contracts) from at least the late nineteenth century. That is to say, the unconscious teleological assumption that markets (modernity, liberalism) and citizenship necessarily march forward hand in hand must be resisted, or at least argued explicitly.[18] The "worst case scenario" suggests that

[18] The relationship between capitalism and citizenship has been theorized in terms of the needs of capitalist societies both to create the individual "free" worker and to assure the active cooperation of its members (ameliorating class conflict to a degree). A classic expression is Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of*

the inequality of markets may overwhelm egalitarianism of citizenship. In Europe and North America, then, citizenship might not survive the economic reality of growing class divisions; in China, even more radical inequalities, augmented by the coercive power of a kleptocratic state ruling over a vast countryside, might prevent the formation of a full citizenship. Conversely, perhaps the neo-liberalism of the last couple of decades has already peaked: persistent economic dislocations globally since the late 1990s have called into question the notion of citizenship as an entirely private sphere of the individual standing alone between the market and the state. New forms of citizenship such as identity politics, various non-governmental organizations, NIMBY (not-in-my-back-yard) movements, and the like—for all their limitations and problems—may continue the two-centuries-long process of taming capitalism and saving it from itself. Such movements are a latent source for active citizenship that periodically come for the fore in local (national) settings. China may offer a challenge to the standard "story about Anglo-American citizenship" that tells of the triumph of popular sovereignty over absolutism through the rise of markets and the private sphere, which heroically lay the foundation for individual freedom by slaying the despotic state.[19] If China and other places did in the twenty-first century somehow create a more collectivist, only partially anti-statist citizenship, this could shape the course of globalization.

This book thus raises more questions than it answers. In effect, the reader must put together a larger story of what, in China, makes citizens, what kind of citizens, and what "changing meanings" of citizenship have been produced and may continue to be produced. Of course, "citizenship" is a slippery concept, and it is a specific problem of this book that neither the editors nor most of the authors attempted, even

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Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); see also Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism,* vol. 2, *Nation-State and Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

19 Margaret R. Somers, "The Privatization of Citizenship: How to Unthink a Knowledge Culture," in Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunts, eds., *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Direction in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 136-137.

conditionally, any kind of rigorous definition. Such criticisms notwithstanding, this is an important and valuable book. The better theorized articles include those by Goodman and O'Brien—which are also empirically among the richest. Some articles are important in their own right but had little to do with citizenship—for example Shih's discussion on relations between minority groups and the state here implicitly deals with citizenship issues but does little to bring them out directly. Future research may want to focus more on bringing the better-developed fields of nationalism and ethnic studies (*pace* Rigger) to bear on the dilemmas of citizenship. Still, the articles in this book will serve as a foundation for further study of both Chinese citizenship and comparative scholarship.