Rise of the Red Engineers: The Cultural Revolution and the Origins of China's New Class, by Joel Andreas. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009. xviii + 344 pp. US$74.00 (hardcover), US$27.95 (paperback).

Joel Andreas' strikingly ambitious goal is to explain the rise of an élite technocratic class in contemporary China. Andreas' case study centers on Tsinghua University, whose alumni include President Hu Jintao and Hu's heir presumptive, Xi Jinping. The heart of his argument is that two leading groups, old élites whose authority was based on cultural capital and new élites who had political capital, clashed throughout the 1950s and 1960s and eventually merged into a new class as a result of the Cultural Revolution. Andreas makes a convincing case that class-leveling efforts during the Mao Zedong era, particularly revolutionary experiments in education, are the key to understanding why technocrats are in charge of the Chinese Communist Party today.

  Rise of the Red Engineers is a welcome contrast to scholarship on contemporary China that dismisses the Mao years as crazy or as irrelevant to the reform period. Andreas takes the ideology and policies of the Mao era seriously and judges the results of Mao's programs by their own stated goals, specifically the Party's "commitment to eliminate class distinctions, including those based on the differences between mental and manual labor" (p. xi). According to Andreas, radical education policies, including the mass recommendation of worker–peasant–soldier students, the elimination of university entrance exams, and checks on official power "had many deleterious side effects, but they were effective in advancing their class-leveling goals" (p. 269).

  Andreas' introduction and conclusion situate his argument in a larger theoretical framework and compare red engineers in China to technocratic rule in the Soviet Union. The Chinese political system ended up looking more like élitist Saint-Simonian "rule by the talented" than a Marxist society free of class distinctions. This result was neither intentional nor inevitable, Andreas argues. Instead, the Cultural Revolution had the unintended consequence of uniting previously antagonistic élites, who moved to protect their own interests rather than continuing to pursue class leveling. During the 1950s and 1960s, experts who had accumulated cultural resources (educational credentials) before 1949 became redder, joining the Party and learning to speak its language. Over the same period, relatively uneducated red cadres gained technical expertise. The distinction between the two groups gradually shrank and, when both intellectuals and Party officials came under fierce attack during the early stage of the Cultural Revolution, they converged into a single élite class.

  The book is divided into four parts: "Building Socialism (1949–1966)", "The Cultural Revolution (1966–1968)", "Institutionalizing the Cultural Revolution (1968–1976)" and "The New Era (1976–present)". The middle sections on the Cultural Revolution are the strongest and have the richest sources. Andreas conducted interviews with 98 Tsinghua teachers, workers and students, including prominent rebel leader Kuai Dafu. The interview data are supplemented by Red Guard publications and such periodicals as the *Qinghua gongbao* (Tsinghua

Bulletin, 1954–66) and *Qinghua zhanbao* (Tsinghua Battle Report, 1970–77). Bulletins and battle reports are useful, but it is worth noting that the material they contain has been filtered and cleaned up. I wonder whether Andreas' conclusions would have looked different if he had been able to get his hands on firsthand archival material like personnel files on individual students, performance and promotion reports, self-criticism letters, diaries and the minutes of meetings.

Even without the dusty handwritten sources from archives and flea markets that scholars of the Mao period are beginning to use, Andreas' book holds up well because his interviewees come across as real people with complicated motives and genuine, believable enthusiasm for revolutionary change. Many remain proud of the role that students played in research and curriculum development during the 1970s, but they also make it clear that supervision of officials "from below" was ineffective because Tsinghua's top authority at the time, the workers' propaganda team, was itself exempt from mass supervision. This led to "familiar problems of political dependence" (p. 138).

Andreas is careful to limit his conclusions to the small echelon of élites who had access to university education, and he is right to add the caveat that Tsinghua "remained a very élite institution" (p. 179), even when most of its students were from worker–peasant–soldier backgrounds and its professors were toiling at a May 7 Cadre School in Jiangxi province. I suspect that Andreas' model of élite convergence might not work as neatly if applied to different types of élites in Chinese society, like village leaders or military officials, but I hope that future scholars take up the challenge and test the provocative ideas in this book.

Andreas' signal achievement is in using complex human stories to construct a compelling and tightly packaged argument that pushes us to think about the world in new ways. He succeeds because his goal is to explain what happened and why, rather than to give the entire Mao era a simple thumbs-up or thumbs-down. Everyone interested in contemporary China and modern Chinese history should read this book.

<div align="right">Jeremy Brown
Simon Fraser University</div>

Maid in China: Media, Morality, and the Cultural Politics of Boundaries, by Wanning Sun. London: Routledge, 2009. xviii + 206 pp. £80.00/US$160.00 (hardcover).

Among the nearly 150 million internal migrants seeking work in post-Mao China, the familiar yet largely unnoticed domestic worker serves as a valuable focus to understand the marginalized subject in the "consumer-citizen" era. In her engaging book, Wanning Sun focuses on the "cultural politics of boundaries and power", illustrated by rural migrants' struggles within the urban "moral economy". Drawing on worker narratives and media stories as her sources, Sun also highlights how popular media influences the subject positions and everyday practices of employers