Never Turn Back: China and the Forbidden History of the 1980s. By Julian Gewirtz. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022. vi, 418 pp. ISBN: 9780674241848.

Zhao Ziyang is the star of Julian Gewirtz's history of elite politics during China's 1980s. Zhao, who served as premier from 1980 to 1987 and as general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from 1987 until June 1989, was at the center of contentious debates about China's economic, political, and technological development, often pushing for more openness and faster changes in all three realms. Gewirtz draws on newly available sources to show how Zhao attempted to push a reform agenda throughout the 1980s. Paramount leader Deng Xiaoping gave Zhao a surprisingly long leash but finally lost trust in him, culminating in Zhao being purged and placed under house arrest during the Tiananmen protests of 1989. Gewirtz shows how Deng Xiaoping moved to erase Zhao—along with the openness and policy experimentation that Zhao championed—from officially approved histories of the 1980s.

Never Turn Back is a valuable account of elite decision-making and an indispensable resource for scholars researching the history of China's 1980s. As historians move beyond the Mao Zedong era to study the 1980s, they need to know what top leaders were thinking, arguing about, and working toward. Gewirtz provides a framework and clues about how to study the decade: Deng Xiaoping was relatively disengaged while Zhao Ziyang was reading widely, engaging a variety of advisers, experimenting with new approaches, and regularly meeting with Western economists and futurists. This means that researchers could benefit by starting research on new topics related to China's 1980s by consulting *Zhao Ziyang's Collected Works* 趙紫陽文集, a four-volume set published by the Chinese University of Hong Kong Press in 2016, which Gewirtz draws on extensively and effectively. Gewirtz's restoration of Zhao to a central role is an important corrective and contribution.

The book has six parts. The first four are thematic, touching on ideology and propaganda, the economy, technology, and political reform. The final two parts are chronological, covering the dramatic swings from the Thirteenth Party Congress of late 1987 to botched price reforms, rampant inflation, and panic buying in 1988, and to the Tiananmen protests and crackdown of 1989 and beyond. In each chapter, Gewirtz emphasizes conflict and debate. He shows how top officials considered multiple alternative paths for China's economic and political systems. Gewirtz's discussion of political reform is especially exciting, analyzing how Zhao Ziyang and others explored ways to make the CCP more accountable and responsive but were ultimately stymied by economic missteps or by elder leaders' fearful reactions to political changes that threatened autocratic regimes in the Philippines, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Taiwan.

In addition to his convincing characterization of the 1980s as a time of constant contestation among political elites, Gewirtz's other main contribution is to pull back the curtain to reveal how, starting in 1989, propaganda authorities airbrushed debates about China's future out of the officially approved CCP version of history. The two main general secretaries of the decade, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, disappeared from official narratives. The vacuum left in the story was filled by Deng Xiaoping, who became misleadingly known as the "central architect of reform and

opening." Propagandists recast what had been an open age of exciting possibilities as a battle pitting Deng Xiaoping's Four Cardinal Principles (meaning unshakable CCP control over politics and society) against a foreign-led conspiracy to introduce "bourgeois liberalization" to China. The CCP's grimly fabricated narrative makes the 1980s sound boring and not worth studying. Shutting down discussion and research is the party's goal. Gewirtz's counternarrative opens up countless future research topics about a vibrant and vital period.

Given how the decade ended, with Deng Xiaoping playing a decisive role in purging Zhao Ziyang and ordering the army to open fire on civilians in Beijing, one possible critique of the book could be that Gewirtz has overemphasized Zhao's influence. If Deng was as disengaged and distant as Gewirtz claims, how was it possible for Deng to sweep Zhao aside and to make him disappear so swiftly and thoroughly? Deng's revolutionary seniority and affinity for dictatorship, which he repeatedly voiced during the 1980s, ended up overwhelming Zhao's nominal power. This tension in Gewirtz's narrative appears most notably in his analysis of the Tiananmen crisis of 1989. He writes that Zhao "did break with the official line of the party center, the April 26 editorial, and the decision to impose martial law—a fact made apparent to all by his public statements from May 4 to his remarks in Tiananmen Square on May 19. This was an unsustainable position for the CCP's General Secretary" (253). As the general secretary, Zhao was the top leader of the party. His public statements could in fact be considered the official line. What made Zhao's position unsustainable was that the party center was speaking with two voices in May 1989 because Deng was not letting the general secretary take the lead. At crucial turning points, Deng's voice overwhelmed all other voices.

Before Deng purged Zhao, he purged Hu Yaobang. Hu was the CCP's general secretary for most of the decade, while Zhao was in the top position for only two and a half years. Gewirtz, however, devotes much more space to Zhao than to Hu, and depicts Zhao as more dynamic, interesting, and open to new ideas than Hu was, even though Hu set the tone for the decade as a time of moderation and reconciliation after the traumas of the Mao years. Future books about elite politics during the 1980s will likely push back against Gewirtz by placing more emphasis on Hu's leadership contribution and exploring the interplay and relationship between Hu and Zhao.

As excitingly open as elite politics appear in Gewirtz's book, it is remarkable how rarely the sources he cites mention women, rural people, non-Han people, or the complexities of Chinese society more generally. In the few instances when women, rural life, or ethnic minorities do appear, they come across as problems for elites to manage or violently suppress. This reflects how distant top Chinese leaders, all of whom were city-based Han men, were from the realities and challenges of everyday life. It exposes the limits of elites' creativity and imagination. This is an indictment of the CCP's male-dominated and urban Han-dominated single-party dictatorship, not a critique of Gewirtz. In Gewirtz's brief mention of the one-child policy, which had a profound impact on hundreds of millions of people during the 1980s, he accurately notes how the policy deeply harmed women and girls. He writes convincingly that the "task of controlling the 'social system' was more challenging in the real world than the cybernetic projections indicated, requiring coer-

cion and violence to achieve its goals" (121). As historians turn their attention to the real world of China's 1980s, they cannot ignore Gewirtz's must-read chronicle of how the Communist Party's top leaders tried but ultimately failed to find alternatives to coercion and violence.

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The Sound of Salvation: Voice, Gender, and the Sufi Mediascape in China. By Guangtian Ha. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022. xiv, 293 pp. ISBN: 9780231552486.

Guangtian Ha's *The Sound of Salvation* offers crucial insight into the contemporary lifeworld of Sufi Muslims in northwestern China. The first published book-length treatment of the Jahriyya order in English, Ha's book briefly covers the history of the Jahriyya and their polyphonic recitation variances, which are a consequence of historical displacement and persecution.[1] The book's main contribution, however, lies in its rich ethnographical detail regarding current Jahriyya's gendered organization of religious ritual and how the community has more recently fared in the face of China's breathtaking urbanization, the saturation of mass media, and the state's unabashed promotion of cultural majoritarianism. Thanks to Ha's elaborate and precise prose, which is peppered with sardonic humor, the book sustains readers' attention throughout the pages. It particularly excels in demonstrating the usefulness of the Jahriyya's cultural eccentricity for complicating the study of orality/aurality in Islam; the importance of bodily rituals, and their capacity in sustaining subjunctive sociopolitical visions; the impact of mass media technologies and their Janus-faced roles in both enhancing and undermining charisma; and the division of "labor of faith" along gender lines.

The first part of the book situates the embodied Jahriyya traditions firmly in the flux of inter-Asian verbal and textual communication networks in the pre-nation-state era. Ha's centering of sound and the vocalization of Qur'anic Arabic—rather than its universalizing textualization—as the locomotive of the spread of Islam breathes fresh air into our understanding of inter-Asian communications. The author's deep philological investigation into the Jahriyya's classics through the channels of Arabic, Persian, and Turkic also reinforces the argument for cultural fluidity and hybridity on the eastern flank of central Eurasia during the transimperial era. Ha takes issue with the theory of the Yemeni origin of the Jahriyya, initially raised by Joseph Fletcher in the 1980s, arguing that "we need to take all versions of the pedigree with a grain of salt" (65).[2] Apparently unavailable to the author at the time of his research, a 2021 publication of the Jahriyya's own genealogical account, *Rashahat*, which appears in both Arabic and Persian (some may see in the bilingualism a semblance of Chagatai, the predecessor of modern Uyghur) and is filled with Turkic toponyms, opens up exciting prospects for new research on the highly likely Perso-Turkic origin of the Jahriyya order.[3]

Ha also briefly entertains the evident affinity between the Jahriyya *Madih* and the *Mawlid* narrative tradition in Shiism but dismisses their striking resemblance as