

The second omission is the question of managerial professionalism and its actual or potential impact, if any. We do not know from these studies whether the diaspora firms reported as expanding and diversifying are doing so by virtue of hybridizing with their contexts by the absorption of new means of coordination and control in their organizations, or whether they are simply stretching the Chinese organizational model further. It is perhaps unfair to expect that question to be addressed in what are essentially social rather than organizational studies, but the issue remains intriguing.

Overall, this book is a worthy and scholarly contribution to the study of the ethnic Chinese diaspora and will be of help to sociologists, development specialists, urban studies specialists and policy makers in several fields.

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Chinese Medicine Men: Consumer Culture in China and Southeast Asia, by Sherman Cochran. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006. x + 242 pp. US\$45.00/£29.95/€41.50 (hardcover).

In *Chinese Medicine Men: Consumer Culture in China and Southeast Asia*, Sherman Cochran examines the interrelated processes of globalization and localization, and the rise of Chinese consumer culture. Through detailed histories of early-20th-century Chinese entrepreneurs, he critiques analyses of globalization that focus solely on the impact of Western-based corporations on non-Western consumers, showing instead how Chinese entrepreneurs operated “beyond the frontiers of globalization”, evaded political boundaries, localized goods and facilitated cultural homogenization. He relates how aspects of “the West” and Chinese culture were locally defined, (re)invented, appropriated and modified, as these cultural mediators promoted their businesses and products. In doing so, he shifts attention from the political or intellectual spheres to individual agents as the primary loci for change, and away from Western history as the exclusive context for globalization in early 20th century China.

Cochran first describes the Yue family, owners of a famous traditional Chinese medicine shop named Tongren Tang. Although the Yues enforced family tradition by prohibiting members from opening additional Tongren Tang branches, they also modified it by allowing the creation of “Olde Yue Family Shoppes”. Yue Daren was thus able to establish a chain of stores, following Tongren Tang’s lead in using specific traditions to foster the impression that his stores were local and family-operated. Because consumers were already familiar with his remedies, Yue’s problem was primarily one of supply. Cochran shows how he was able to reject Western-style advertising in favor of a more traditional image, while simultaneously embracing a Western organizational form (the chain store).



On the other hand, Chinese proprietors of Western drugstores, such as Huang Chujiu, used print advertising to educate Chinese consumers about their unfamiliar “new medicine”. In doing so, they combined elements of Chinese culture with Western ideas and promotional techniques. For example, although Huang’s drugstore and drug packaging appeared Western, the medicine itself was Chinese; he employed local artists and writers to produce advertising featuring representations of “the West” in Chinese-language media. Huang was thus able to open a mass market by distributing advertisements through a nationwide marketing hierarchy, appealing to the exotic Occident while rendering his products intelligible by retaining familiar Chinese medical notions.

As further illustration of early-20th-century Chinese entrepreneurs’ ability to reach a mass market across macroregional borders, Cochran describes Xiang Songmao’s business activities. Like Huang, Xiang created a hierarchical marketing system for his “Western” goods to appeal to China’s urban élite. While localizing each level to some extent, Xiang directed this process closely from his headquarters through centralized control and careful appointment of managers from his native place. Without direct involvement, his products and advertisements were appropriated by shop owners of independently owned affiliates to suit their own needs. Although conceding that this entrepreneur’s control was not total, Cochran uses this example to counter the scholarly tendency to focus on the educated, cosmopolitan élite as the sole facilitators of localization.

The case of a self-identified “fixer” and owner of the New Asia Pharmaceutical Company, Xu Guanquan, illustrates Chinese entrepreneurs’ ability to expand successfully across not only macroregional but also enemy lines. Like Huang and Xiang, Xu targeted a mass market with a nationwide manufacturing and marketing system, through which promotional materials, such as professional and popular magazines associating New Asia with Chinese science, were distributed. Further, Xu’s political experiences—including ties with the Japanese, Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist government and underground Nationalists in Shanghai—not only protected his access to markets within and outside Shanghai, but also opened new markets for him to exploit.

Cochran broadens his analysis further by examining the promotional efforts of Aw Boon-Haw—co-founder of Tiger Balm products, whose trademark springing tiger appealed to, and was localized by, consumers across cultures (Chinese and non-Chinese). With branches and newspapers founded to promote his products in various Chinese and Southeast Asian cities, Aw’s business was not only transcultural but also transnational. Despite the interventions of Western, Chinese and Japanese governments in Chinese business during this period Aw, like Xu, was extremely successful at turning these forces to his benefit, circumventing political barriers to reach national and international markets. Citing these cases, Cochran questions the notion that these governments thoroughly “subordinated, integrated, restricted, and enveloped Chinese capitalists and businesses in the early 20th century” (p. 10).

Cochran critiques both top-down and bottom-up analyses of consumer culture for failing to consider the agents who mediated between politicians or the intelligentsia and consumers, as well as between “the West” and Chinese culture. Although these entrepreneurs differed in many ways, they each selected and localized aspects of Western-style business while continuing to use their traditions and social networks, redefining what was considered “Western” or “Chinese” in the process. While he does not deny the imposition of Western capitalist institutions, he shows how individuals previously relegated to the “periphery” were able to produce and disseminate consumer culture. Rather than understanding the relationship between governments and business during this period as one of imposition and control, Cochran suggests that it was a two-way process. Further, he allows for the possibility that consumer demands and representations in turn influenced the direction of entrepreneurial efforts. However, this theme is relatively underdeveloped, leaving us to ponder the role of consumers in the globalization–localization process.

While Cochran briefly discusses consumers’ variable interpretation of goods (such as Tiger Balm’s localized meanings), he professes a relative paucity of data on these end-users. Therefore, while his claim that consumers differentiated between Chinese and Western medicine in accordance with their social position is logical, its supporting evidence is not as robust as that which supports his conclusions about the aforementioned entrepreneurs. A consumer-oriented study of the caliber of this book would certainly further enrich our understanding of these intertwined processes.

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Contagious Capitalism: Globalization and the Politics of Labor in China, by Mary Elizabeth Gallagher. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. vi + 240 pp. US\$35.00/£22.95 (hardcover).

Mary Elizabeth Gallagher’s first book, *Contagious Capitalism*, draws upon her research degree to provide an analysis of the politics of Chinese labor during the period since Chinese post-Maoist reform began. This is an essential read for anyone interested in any aspect of the political economy of modern China because the book expertly draws together many strands of analysis and evidence to provide a detailed and powerful argument on the relation between economic development and political stability.

The book examines the relation between foreign direct investment and economic change which the author argues led to unintended consequences for more wholesale capitalist reform of the Chinese industrial and economic system. The book is divided into five substantive chapters, of which the first lays out the theoretical arguments of the effect of international capital flows