to imagine a volume with articles by officials of similar statutes being produced in the United States or any other Western nation. It should prove to be of great value to Chinese legal scholars, students of Chinese law, and practicing attorneys.

Taken together, these two books provide a diligent reader with a comprehensive understanding of the current state of commercial regulation in the PRC. The mix of primary texts, background materials, and unofficial glosses create a multidimensional treatment of commercial law in the PRC, knowledge that is useful within the legal sphere but which should prove especially useful to scholars in the social sciences who are searching for new perspectives on China's economic and social development.

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Although readers may take exception to the Eurocentric interpretation imposed on this collection of folktales, the stories themselves are delightful. They were selected, translated, and arranged by historian Karen Gernant in order to illustrate her thesis that traditional Chinese women are "strong," "assertive," and "independent." Gernant's aim is to counter the Euro-American stereotype of Chinese women as "dependent," "submissive," and so forth. Gernant peppers her introductory remarks with this didactic terminology, which, for anyone half familiar with the topic, becomes a bit tedious. Gernant is nevertheless explicit about what she intends: "I have imposed an outsider's structure on this collection of folk tales" (p. 1). Moreover, she acknowledges that Chinese readers find nothing unusual in the way women are depicted in these stories. The consequence is ironic: Gernant is trapped in the very same discourse community whose image of the "meek" and "submissive" woman she seeks to dispel. By not reflecting on what makes these images of women "Chinese," she in effect retains them as objects of European American–centered (and feminist) discourse.
In building her case for "strong," "independent" Chinese women, Gernant is compelled to question the prevalence and effect of such institutions as footbinding, female infanticide, arranged marriage, and widow suicide. Forget that these were very different kinds of institutions, or that they affected different women in different ways, or that, with the exception of marriage, her selection of folktales does not address these customary practices; the presumption is that women who bound their feet, for instance, became the abject victims of patriarchy. If footbinding victimized women and made them submissive, then, following Gernant’s line of reasoning, it could not have been a very popular institution because Chinese women were "strong," "independent," and "able." The terms of discourse—"strong women" versus "meek women"—simply obfuscate any serious attempt to understand the traditional roles of Chinese women whether in fantasy or in historical reality. Gernant does, however, give us the wonderful tales themselves.

These stories involve all kinds of ordinary and extraordinary people, immortals, demigods, demons, and monsters. There is a preponderance of young lovers (the whole of part 2) whose desires are thwarted by thoughtless parents and cruel stepparents, and there are ordinary, hardworking people who cope and battle with corrupt and tyrannical agents of the gentry class or with the natural and cosmic calamities that happen when monstrous figures move up the rivers and through the mountains. Not all is calamitous and tragic, however. There is some justice, happiness, and occasional humor, as in "Axiu Cleverly Reads a Strange Letter." Here and in several other stories, a husband goes off to Southeast Asia to make money. In this story he remits money to his wife, Axiu, through a courier, who attempts to embezzle part of the remittance; but Axiu, who is illiterate, deciphers the word game embedded in the animal drawings on her husband’s accompanying letter, which specify the exact amount remitted, and with this she is able to confront the courier with his shameful misdeed.

Many tales take place on thresholds that join the living world of the here-and-now to the spiritual world of the hereafter and heretofore. Several tales depict immortals who prefer living in the here-and-now, while many mortals through terrible suffering and self-sacrifice become prominent fixtures in the local landscape. Many stories end accordingly, as an account of how a particular promontory or piece of architecture or local resource came to be. Most stories are geared to particular locations in and around Fujian; these stories have direct relevance to locality studies and perhaps even to fengshui (geomancy) studies. The depiction of "women," with a few exceptions, is incidental. Women along with the men are simply actors caught up in the great quandaries of making ends meet and of meeting their ends.

This collection is aimed more at a general readership than at academicians or students of folklore. The tales come from the Anthology of Sixty Years of Fujian Folk Tales (title in translation), but we are given very little information about the
original work. There is no discussion of methods of collection, problems of interpretation or translation, use of vernacular and dialect, or the politics of publication. There are some endnotes, again geared to general readers, but there is no general index, much less an index of tale types. Although Gernant suggests that these stories, popular among ordinary people, reflect values that are often unaffected by or are at odds with the dominant Confucian norms and definitions—an arguable point—there is no discussion of how they might have been shaped by or reflect or fail to reflect the dominant discourses of the past sixty years.

The tales are augmented by drawings borrowed from the original Chinese text. The present English text reads smoothly and has retained a genuine Chinese flavor even in this accomplished translation. There are inevitably a few rough spots, as in "She had a melon face and almond eyes; she was very pretty and charming" (p. 116). Whether in Chinese or English, a "melon face" sounds gross—funny—and is not a sign of beauty or charm; in all likelihood the Chinese text reads guazi, which should be rendered as "melon seed," which is considered the shape of a pretty face, at least in China. Nonetheless, I thoroughly enjoyed reading these tales, and I believe the general reader will find them most engaging.

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Chairman Mao Would not be Amused is a book of blood, tears, sadness, and disappointment. Written chiefly by a new generation of writers, most of the stories here, set in both the present and the past, express their authors' skepticism and contempt for what has happened during the bewildering period of economic reform that began in 1978, and they ask where it will lead China and what has gone wrong with this great kingdom of the Yellow Emperor.

This is a period when images of the West erode the daily lives of 1.2 billion Chinese; Western skyscrapers mushroom in the cities, MTV and rock and roll are icons of the youth, and capitalism has become a hot catchphrase. Economically,