effectiveness, accuracy, and accountability. In chap. 8, Sluka argues that drone warfare had none of those characteristics, creates "collateral disasters," and loses hearts and minds rather than winning them. He argues, too, that use of drones converts war into a spectator sport for which he coins the term "spectacide" which he says "is *virtual* killing, such as by remote-control drone pilots" (192).

In the ethnographically closely observed chap. 9, Victoria Sanford explores the imbricated use of violence by "gangs, drug traffickers, organized crime, the army, police, political parties, and elite capital" (195). She shows how the resulting lawlessness creates a sense of impunity because there are no consequences to violating the law and those who should be administering it are themselves corrupted.

Chap. 10 presents Matthew Sumera's analysis of the ways in which music intersects with war. Sumera offers an ethnographically rich analysis of music and video. He describes the ways in which these media lead to the normalization of war, and the creation of imaginaries to support that normalization.

"Virtual War" concludes with an ethnographically reflexive account of rural Tanzania by Koen Stroeken. He looks at the ways in which miners and magic mix to create spaces of violence.

Collectively these are engaging and engaged contributions. The book contains both sparkling ethnography and tightly argued theoretical analysis. Yet, it also includes essays that are not well grounded ethnographically and are largely polemical. Along with much useful and interesting information, careful readers will note many instances where data are selected for their polemical value, seemly without concern for systematic data collection, levels of reliability, or appropriateness. Similarly, they will find in the pages of "Virtual War" analyses that open interesting lines of careful thought. But the reader will also find a rhetorical casualness that elides distinctions and stretches analogical reasoning beyond its breaking point. At those times, it is not at all clear whose imaginaries are being presented, those of the researchers or those of the people being researched. For these reasons, readers will find this a challenging book from which they will gain much insight and frustration.

Robert A. Rubinstein

Yu, LiAnne: Consumption in China. How China's New Consumer Ideology Is Shaping the Nation. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014. 207 pp. ISBN 978-0-7456-6971-7. Price: £ 15.99

As Yu states in her introduction, this book is based on "observations and ethnographic research" gathered over a 20-year period, and its style is indeed that of a text that ponderously and rather skillfully weaves its way through the past few decades dropping ethnographic anecdotes along the way, rather than a more structured study. As a result, it is very readable and opens up many areas of exploration for those relatively new to studying China and/or consumption. It is not perhaps such an ideal text for those who have been working in these areas for some time as it resists exploring many of the philosophical questions turned up in any detail. For example, Yu argues that sometimes consumption in China is deeply personal, and other times (for example with the boycotting of Japanese goods) intensely political. The (apparent) divide between the personal and political, and discussions as to whether the nature and structure of this has changed in the post-Mao period is not interrogated. This said, the rich ethnographic detail, presented in this almost montage style, may add much enjoyable color and depth to the factual knowledge of more advanced students.

The introduction is an excellent way for less advanced students to gain first access to key theories of consumption – Miller, Maffesoli, Bourdieu, Baudrillard, Veblen, Marx, de Certeau, Friedman, Ritzer are all signposted in ways that make their key points clear. None of these classics are explored in any depth, but then that is not the purpose here. There are interesting reflections on the difference between Chinese conspicuous consumption and that of Veblen's leisure class, specifically the way in which the Chinese version is about being seen to be "moving up" rather than "having made it" – "conspicuous accomplishment" as Yu rather effectively calls it. The seamlessly integrated role of the Internet when it comes to consumerism is also usefully explored, as is the changing nature of shopping spaces from the Mao period to the present day, and generational differences in attitudes towards consumption.

Towards the end of the book, the reader may well be yearning for a more definite stance to emerge, following the (albeit skillful, enjoyable, and useful) array of theories mentioned and contrasted with each other in quick succession. Fear not, this does eventually happen to some extent. Essentially Yu sits towards the agency side of structure-agency see-saw, acknowledging the strong state that seeks to control (i.e., encourage) consumer behavior, but asserting that consumers are asserting their agency by demanding consumer rights and making consumer choices. She takes the view that consumerism unites people (especially the younger generation) and provides opportunities for creativity and a burgeoning online public sphere. This popular view is briefly pitted against other more classically Frankfurt School-related rhetoric, but not in any great philosophical depth. For example, the *nature* of this state encouragement to spend (compared say to the Keynesian advocation of consumerism in the West), and indeed this agency is not investigated. Again though, to be fair, this is not the purpose of the book. It does not set out to be a deep, philosophical investigation; it is, however, a very well-crafted, interesting, and accessible insight to contemporary China and the way in which Western thought on consumerism can (or cannot) be related to it.

Alison Hulme