than car parts? Is there a common feature to spheres of social life to which the government has become most indifferent? Are there common features of situations in which there is a real contest for control, or in which the government appears particularly on the retreat? These are the kinds of questions that these essays bring to mind, and pursuing them would push us to move towards a more analytic perspective on the changes described and conceptualized here. Not a bad idea for a successor volume.

ANDREW G. WALDER

The Living Tree. The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today. Edited by TU WEI-MING. [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994. xvi + 295 pp. Hard cover £25.00, $45.00, ISBN 0-8047-2191-2; paperback £9.95, $14.95, ISBN 0-8047-2137-8.]

First published as a special issue of *Daedalus* (Spring 1991), this collection has been enriched for the Stanford edition with a Preface and two additional contributions. In his Preface, Tu sets out the *problematik* – the changing meaning of being Chinese – by identifying three symbolic universes that interact with each other in differing degrees of intensity: China proper as the core, the Chinese diaspora, and the international communities of scholars, students, journalists and traders. While the main focus of the book is on the fate of the Chinese intellectual living and working abroad (in particular in the United States), the existential question is the same for all Chinese: with the core losing its geopolitical leadership, is "cultural" China viable as a newly constituted entity to create intellectual criteria that could define "Chineseness"? It is this question that the various authors address in their contributions.

No short review can do justice to *The Living Tree*, a collection of richly textured, tightly argued and thought-provoking essays, all of which make clear that the answer to the question of what Chineseness entails in the world today cannot be a purely intellectual one, but has equally to satisfy complex emotional implications. Tu Wei-ming sets the stage in his "Cultural China: the periphery as the center" in which he develops the concept of cultural space – a concept that encompasses the continuous interaction between all three symbolic universes and points to the creation of a transnational Chinese intellectual community. In "The inner world of 1830" Mark Elvin explores the meaning of being Chinese before the Western invasion of China on the basis of a novel, Li Rurshen's *Destinies of the Flowers in the Mirror*. In a breathtaking overview entitled "No solace from Lethe: history, memory, and cultural identity in twentieth-century China" Vera Schwarcz brackets the intellectual experience of modern China with the May Fourth Movement and the Tiananmen events and draws parallels with the Jewish experience. In "Being Chinese: the peripheralization of traditional identity" Myron L. Cohen addresses the theme of unity and diversity in Chinese culture. Ambrose Yeo-chi King explores a central social phenomenon, personal relationship, in "Kuan-hsi

and network building: a sociological interpretation." In "Among non-Chinese" Wang Gungwu differentiates between the Chinese "sojourner" (*huaqiao*) and those overseas Chinese who prefer to see themselves as "of Chinese descent" (*huayi*) in a world that is no longer China-oriented. A similar theme is addressed by David Yen-ho Wu's "The construction of Chinese and non-Chinese identities." That the image of women held in the People's Republic does not fundamentally differ from traditional views, despite lipservice to gender equality, is demonstrated by Zhu Hong in "The 'evil wife' in contemporary Chinese fiction." The question of assimilation is explored in L. Ling-chi Wang's "Roots and the changing identity of the Chinese in the United States." Victor Hao Li again takes up the theme of "sojourner" (*qiao*) and his transformation into a "bridge" (*qiao*) in his "From qiao to qiao." The last contribution is by Leo Ou-fan Lee and is entitled "On the margins of the Chinese discourse: some personal thoughts on the cultural meaning of the periphery" – a fascinating personal testimony about what it means to be "searching for roots" (*xungen*) on the basis of literary works produced inside and outside China.

This collection of essays is not only highly recommended for any student of 20th-century China, but will undoubtedly also interest readers with a general concern for modern East Asia.

MARTINA DEUCHLER

Chinese Awakenings: Life Stories from the Unofficial China. By JAMES and ANN TYSON. [Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995. xiii + 327 pp. Hardcover $59.95, ISBN 0-8133-2472-6; paperback $19.95, ISBN 0-8133-2473-4.]

Journalists' books on contemporary China are often marred by efforts to sum up all of the nation's complexity in sweeping pronouncements and thin conclusions. James and Ann Tyson offer a refreshing alternative in this book: they stick to reporting. In eight carefully composed profiles, they tell individuals' stories that, in a tangible and accessible way, touch on many of the social phenomena at work in the People's Republic today. The authors, correspondents for the Christian Science Monitor from 1987 to 1992, open with an ordinary migrant woman who leaves her village to become a seamstress in a provincial city. She leaves her husband behind, enjoys the relative freedom and affluence of urban life, and earns enough to send one daughter to medical school, a second to a foreign language institute, and to help a son study at a medical school overseas. There are strains: the son's earlier participation in the student movement in 1989 led to a sharp falling out with his father, a traditionally-minded man who professes to shun politics. The son articulates a young activist's point of view; the father a more traditional, village-oriented approach that politics should be shunned. The migrant woman, mother and wife, blames herself for the family's troubles. But she doesn't move back to the village. Perhaps she never will.