of higher education institutions. In terms of negative aspects, rankings might contribute to “a new dependence culture,” intensified positional competition, and global hegemony. All of these result in further academic inequality, a new imperialism, and Western dominance.

The significant breakthrough of this book lies in the way it theorizes the process of the ranking experiences in Chinese Taiwan. Although this book reiterates some themes from previous studies, new insights such as zoning technology and the closed aspect of rankings are provided. The classification of the matrix might be improved, however, given some ambiguity around the “ecological” and “geographical” notions. In addition, the author attempts to reflect upon the ranking experiences from the perspectives of structuralism and post-structuralism in Chapter 8. These methodological stances would be best presented and discussed earlier in Chapter 3 so as to indicate their relevance to the latter chapters. Nevertheless, this is a book with novel ideas and an effectively arranged framework offering theoretical explanations for these new phenomena. It is recommended reading for those who have a sincere concern about higher education development in this increasingly globalized world.

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New Directions for Education in China. Steven Cowan, Tinghe Jin, Lucia Johnstone Cowan, and Zimeng Pan (Eds.). London, England: IOE Press, 2014. 232 pp., (paperback). £24.99, ISBN: 978-17-827-7103-6.

Many research students will be very pleased to see this volume become available. It can be appreciated on two distinct levels. Firstly, it is a practical guide to small-scale research projects that have mostly been undertaken by individual

researchers. Consisting of nine chapters, each beginning with a detailed explanation of research philosophy and approach, it acts as a sort of research methods guide providing actual examples of different approaches available to graduate students. Secondly, the book is a survey of recent work in a number of hot fields within education studies in China. These fields include subjects such as English and mathematics, educational technology, the development of school and university, citizenship education and the relationship between education and human development. The reader can learn about interesting research focuses involving various theoretical stances and perspectives.

The authors' perspectives are diverse. The chapter entitled "Huadi Experimental Middle School: Can Attempts at Reform Succeed?" by Steven Cowan, provides a case study of a single school in Guangzhou which has been the site of a challenging pedagogic experiment. It offers readers insight into how radical change within a school and its community has been implemented over a number of years. Jin Jin examines the journey of students through the Chinese education system, from humble rural backgrounds to elite universities, adopting what she describes as a life history humanistic perspective, influenced by the sociology of Robert Park in Chicago in the early 20th century. Pan Lin adopts a cultural historical approach towards the changing ideology of the teaching and learning of English over many decades. Most of the authors are young, independent researchers reflecting a new generation of scholars who are casting their eyes on particular aspects of the Chinese educational scene.

The book's final chapter offers a research bibliography for tutors, lecturers, and students who are seeking to develop their interest in the field of Chinese education. It includes book publications, a representative selection of key journal articles and a range of online resources including the website addresses of major Chinese sources such as state, provincial, and municipal education ministries.

The book arose initially from the biennial conference held between Beijing Normal University and Institute of Education, before the Institute merged with University College London. One of the initiators of these conferences, Professor Geoff Whitty, a past Director of the Institute of Education, made the following comment in the introduction to this collection: "... In the context of globalization education policy must increasingly be understood in terms of the nexus between the global and the local" (p. xvii). This outlook is exemplified in Chapter 3 of the book which examines developments in Chinese language education within the

changing London Chinese community over a long period. Another innovative chapter outlines the developing research profile of Beijing Normal University as an institution aspiring to become a leading educational research base in the world.

The title echoes a key challenge facing Chinese education at this point in history. Much of what currently happens relies upon very traditional ways of teaching and learning and this is likely to hold back Chinese social and economic development. Recent Chinese government educational policy statements have recognized this fact. In 2014, the theme of the National Education Conference was extending reforms in education comprehensively and accelerating the modernization of the education governance system and governance ability. Education Minister Yuan Guiren has emphasized that given the crucial importance of education in the wider social sphere, the modernization of educational governance is essential. The chapters record the ever-changing nature of the Chinese educational landscape at a point where Chinese educational studies have also become an important sub-theme within university faculties in the English-speaking world.

From a personal perspective this volume might be seen as a new departure, showing how cooperation between Chinese and UK researchers can produce positive results. The book embodies the spirit of exchange between Chinese and UK universities. It also constitutes a bridge between a generation of senior scholars such as Alex Moore, Geoff Whitty, Hugh Starkey and a younger generation of Chinese scholars who are beginning their work within Chinese higher education and will hopefully enrich the direction of educational research in the future. The book is certainly one for the reading list of any course involving Chinese educational studies.

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