**Joniak-Lüthi, Agnieszka:** The Han. China's Diverse Majority. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015. 187 pp. ISBN 978-0-295-99467-3. Price: £ 33.00

There are good reasons to write a book about the Han. To be sure, the "Han" – which, according to the government of the People's Republic of China, accounts for more than ninety-one percent (or more than 1.2 billion) of the Chinese population – is an imagined category. Yet, as Joniak-Lüthi points out, even though the Han as a category/identity has since the mid-nineteenth century been closely tied to the rise of nationalism in China, and though it has since the 1950s been institutionalized as the first among dozens of so-called nationalities (*minzu*) who comprise the Chinese nation, how those who are identified as "Han" make sense of their Han-ness has actually not been adequately examined in the scholarly literature.

To understand what being "Han" means to those who are so identified in contemporary China, the author conducted interviews with "predominantly urban, mobile, educated, and relatively young Putonghua speakers" (16) who were at the time residing in either Beijing or Shanghai, two of China's largest and most cosmopolitan cities. Findings of the book are also informed by additional fieldwork and interviews conducted by the author in a multiethnic village in southwest China as well as in the district of Aqsu in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

What the author discovered through her fieldwork and interviews, to this reviewer at least, is illuminating though not surprising. As a category/identity, "the Han," we are told, is only one among many others people choose to employ (or deploy) in their daily life. Among the "powerful competitors on the contemporary 'identity market'" (9) are those associated with one's home place(s) as well as those that are constructed along regional, urban/rural, or native/outsider divides. Of course, not all categories/identities are equally powerful in all circumstances. In metropolises such as Beijing and Shanghai where *minzu* divisions are less visible than those found in China's border regions, many who are officially identified as "Han" would "turn to home-place and other non-*minzu* identities to find a feeling of belonging as well as social solidarity and crucial support networks beyond immediate kin" (142). But even though identities based on regional, urban/rural, native/outsider, or occupational divide can be seen as "ethnic" – meaning, according to the author, that they are also often based on "discourses of descent, shared inborn predispositions, and shared destiny" (133) – such identities are ultimately less ethnic and more transient when compared with institutionalized *minzu* identities.

As an historian who is often envious of his colleagues who are able to speak to their "informants" (a label I thought that has, for good reasons, gone out of fashion), I find the arguments in the present work reasonable and instructive. However, I do have several reservations concerning the methodology employed. Let me focus on two. The first has to do with the presentation of research data. I understand that the analysis presented here is primarily based on "almost one hundred semi-structured interviews" (15) and is necessarily of qualitative – rather than quantitative – nature. And while I am just as skeptical about numbers without contexts, I found the author's frequent use of "some of my informants," "the majority of my informants," "a small minority of my informants," or similar formulations (though once "every fourth informant" [47]), to be less than satisfactory. I appreciate that open-ended or semi-structured interviews do not as a matter of course yield data that is easily quantifiable, but if the author's arguments do to some extent (and I think they do) hinge on quantitative claims (as in, in a particular context, "more people claim to be A than to be B"), then a more transparent and precise presentation of the data would seem to be in order.

The second reservation I have has to do with what the author refers to as the "narration" of identities. Joniak-Lüthi is certainly correct in acknowledging that, "depending on their circumstances and interlocutors, Han individuals activate different identities" (4). And she is certainly right that one must be cautious in gauging how the responses given by the participants might be "influenced by what these Han thought their audience expected to hear, particularly when their audience was a foreign researcher" (79). Given her sensitivity to the issue, it is surprising that not more has been done by the author to address this methodological challenge. Of course, studies based on interviews and observations need not (and probably should not) be primarily about the authors and their methodologies, but the arguments of the present work would certainly be more persuasive if the reader were given more information about the contexts of the participants' responses.

One example of how this approach might be undertaken has actually been provided by the author. In a particularly illuminating section of the book (pp. 116–121), Joniak-Lüthi sets out to address the broader issue of Han-ness and its fragmentation by laying out – and discussing the answers to – the three questions she invariably posed to her "informants" at the conclusion of each interview: Do Hanzu all over the country share the same culture (*wenhua*)? Are all Hanzu inherently alike (*tongzhi*)? Do all people classified as Hanzu have "enough" in common to form one *minzu*? Of course, it would be unwise (not to mention impossible) to reproduce in the book all relevant interview transcripts, but as a reader there is certainly something useful (and, dare I say, fascinating) in understanding how conversations about identities did unfold in particular contexts and how identities were activated "depending on circumstances and interlocutors."

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**Josephides, Lisette,** and **Alexandra Hall** (eds.): We the Cosmopolitans. Moral and Existential Conditions of Being Human. New York: Berghahn Books, 2014. 186 pp. ISBN 978-1-78238-276-8. Price: $ 80.00

Cosmopolitanism is a worldview which sees all humans as belonging to one community. More specifically, it is about the relation of individuals and localized cultures to humanity as a whole. The leading question is whether human beings can be conceived as world citi-