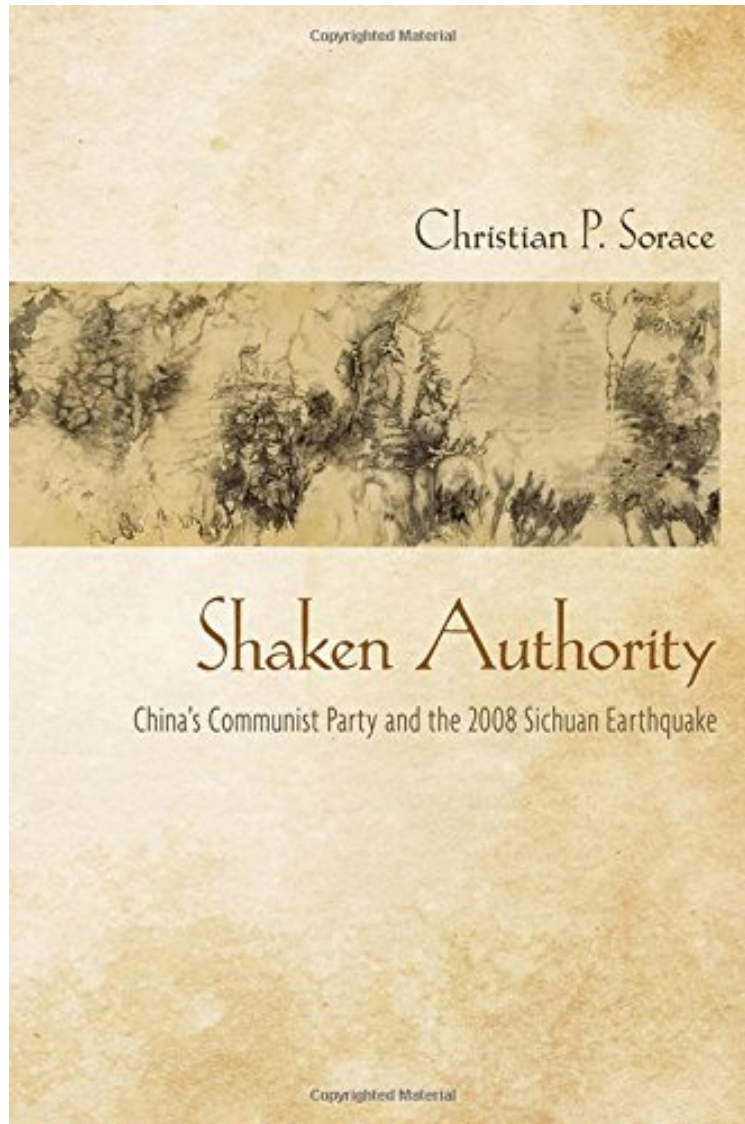


(Download pdf ebook) Shaken Authority: China's Communist Party and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake

Shaken Authority: China's Communist Party and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake

Christian P. Sorace

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Christian P. Sorace : Shaken Authority: China's Communist Party and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shaken Authority: China's Communist Party and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake:

In *Shaken Authority*, Christian P. Sorace examines the political mechanisms at work in the aftermath of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake and the broader ideological energies that drove them. Sorace takes Communist Party ideas and discourse as central to how that organization formulates policies, defines legitimacy, and exerts its power. Sorace argues that the Communist Party has never abandoned its conviction that discourse can shape the world and the people who inhabit it. Sorace also demonstrates how the Communist Party's planning apparatus continues to play a crucial role in engineering China's economy and market construction, especially in the countryside. Sorace takes a distinctive and original interpretive approach to understanding Chinese politics, and *Shaken Authority* demonstrates how Communist Party discourse and ideology influenced the official decisions and responses to the Sichuan earthquake. Sorace provides a clear view of the lived outcomes of Communist Party plans, rationalities, and discourses in the earthquake zone. The three case studies he presents each demonstrate a different type of reconstruction and model of development: urban-rural integration, tourism, and ecological civilization. Sorace's work emphasizes the need for a grounded literacy in the political concepts, discourses, and vocabularies of the Communist Party itself. To dismiss China's official discourse as "empty propaganda," Sorace argues, makes China and Chinese realities harder to understand, not easier.

"*Shaken Authority* is a very fascinating and unconventional book. In his insightful analysis that sees discourse and culture as key to politics, Christian P. Sorace questions the prevalent view of Chinese Communist Party discourse as mere lies and ploys to maintain the Party's grip on power. Sorace seeks to examine how official discourse and the intellectual heritage of Maoism play a large role in governing a potentially volatile and chaotic situation. Maoism is retrieved from the past to shed critical light on how the current political agenda falls short." Ban Wang, Stanford University, author of *The Sublime Figure of History: Aesthetics and Politics in Twentieth-Century China* "*Shaken Authority* is a tour de force. Christian P. Sorace provides us with a fascinating journey into the high and low politics of state-society relations in China via post-Wenchuan Earthquake reconstruction and introduces us to a new way of approaching the intersection of political theory and empirical reality in China." Andrew Mertha, author of *Brothers in Arms* "After the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake, many scholars suggested that the disaster relief and reconstruction process might strengthen civil society in China. In *Shaken Authority*, however, Christian P. Sorace offers a different explanation for political behavior among cadres to understand the outcomes of the post-earthquake reconstruction project based on how the CCP attempted to engineer economic development and maintain legitimacy. His fieldwork yielded rich content that greatly adds to our understanding of the politics of reconstruction in China." Jessica Teets, Middlebury College, author of *Civil Society Under Authoritarianism: The China Model* About the Author Christian P. Sorace is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Australian National University's Centre on China in the World.