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0521839599 - Discovering Nature: Globalization and Environmental Culture in China and Taiwan

Robert P. Weller

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## Discovering Nature

Robert Weller's richly documented account describes the extraordinary transformations which have taken place in Chinese and Taiwanese responses to the environment across the twentieth century. Indeed, as the author points out, within a relatively short time both places can be said to have "discovered" a new concept of nature. The book focuses on nature tourism, anti-pollution movements, and policy implementation to show how the global spread of Western ideas about nature has interacted with Chinese traditions. Inevitably these interactions have been reworked and reconstituted within the local context, and differences of understanding across groups have caused problems in administering environmental reforms. These differences will have to be resolved if the dynamic transformations of the 1980s and 1990s are to be maintained in the twenty-first century. In spite of a more than a century of independent political development, a comparison between China and Taiwan reveals surprising similarities, showing how globalization and shared cultural traditions have outweighed political differences in shaping their environments. The book will appeal to a broad readership from scholars of Asia, to environmentalists, and anthropologists.

ROBERT P. WELLER is Professor of Anthropology and Research Associate of the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs at Boston University. His numerous books and articles on China and Taiwan range from religion to political change, including most recently *Civil Life, Political Change, and Globalization in Asia* (editor, 2005).

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Robert P. Weller

*Boston University*



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viii Acknowledgments

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