

saying that it is the retained earnings that have financed the private enterprises more than any other sources (p. 121).

In the final chapter on 'the unfinished revolution', the author argues that China's transition to a market economy is incomplete. The state still restricts open and fair competition in important segments of the service sector and a few key prices are still state-administered which, he believes, would distort the allocation of resources and slow economic growth (p. 123). Referring to the 3rd Plenum of the 18th Party Congress in November 2013, Lardy indicates that the key prices will be decontrolled including those for various forms of energy, foreign exchange and the cost of capital and, in case they are implemented, these reforms will substantially rebalance Chinese economic growth. As noted in Chapter 3, the author sees the service sector offering more opportunities for the private sector and predicts that reforms in the financial sector will be critical to accelerate the reforms and growth (p. 135). Lardy notes the contemporary debate regarding the degree to which the market should guide China's economic development; again referring to the party conclaves, he assesses that the debate within the Party and among Chinese entrepreneurs will influence the pace of reforms, but not the direction.

The book is a critical discussion of the Chinese reformist agenda, accomplishments and about the prevailing confusion over the scope and depth of economic reforms. What could have been really an asset to this work would have been an examination how the enterprises evolved—an explanation which might have connected the dots between mushrooming of new entrepreneurs and how, or whether, they were politically incentivised; he could have also examined how enterprises emerged at a time when the concept of 'private' was susceptible to ideological assault. The private enterprises that did emerge cannot be generalised as purely entrepreneurial from the liberal point of view; rather, the initial form of private enterprises was an offshoot of politically-induced privatisation. Some of today's leading private firms are classic examples of this, including Lenovo, Huawei and ZTE. Overall, the author has covered a number of transitional aspects of the Chinese economy; his special focus on public-private sectors gives a preview of its coming makeover.

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DONG WANG, *The United States and China: A History from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (Lanham, US: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), pp. 377 + xi, US\$21.41, ISBN-13: 978-0742557826

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This is a well-researched, erudite work by a Chinese academic based in Europe, bearing testimony to the author's scholarship. Each chapter is accompanied by a meticulous,

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long list of annotated ‘further reading’. The bibliography runs to 25 pages, listing some 600 works. That rich collection of writing, to which this volume is a fine addition, befits a bilateral relationship that is surely today the most critical in the world.

The author advances three key propositions that are taken, respectively, from the writing of Fairbank, Cohen and Kirby: (a) ‘US–China relations are an ongoing contest, in an evolving global context’. While China seeks to push the US out of the Asia Pacific, the US views it as a threat to its national and international interests. (b) ‘China has been catching up with and clashing with US capability and desire to control change’. For example, IPR, starting with the US Copyright Act of 1790, has been an object of bilateral contention, even in Qing days; in contemporary times the US portrays China as an offender, while China views IPR as a strategic resource. [This brings to mind a query: do we in India frame IPR policy in such rigorous terms, and act accordingly?] (c) ‘America has been a model for China, but America has also been challenged from the beginning’. American missionaries achieved much to ‘modernize Chinese education, science, technology, medicine, and culture and society in general... (but) many Chinese perceived Christianity as a foreign intrusion into their religious and cultural traditions’. The distinct American contribution was to the rise of Protestant Christianity in China. At the same time, the author credits the US with helping the PRC’s shift from reliance on violent revolution to ‘belief in prosperity through evolution’.

Three main sections of the book, spread over 12 chapters, cover the transition from 1784 to 1911, commencing with the arrival of the first US merchant ship at Canton, in this period the only port open to foreign traders, latecomers compared with European states; 1912 to 1970, from the establishment of China’s first republic to the initiation of transformative dialogue between the People’s Republic of China and the US; and finally, 1971 to 2011, from the Kissinger–Nixon talks with Zhou–Mao, to contemporary times.

Part I. US assertion in 1898 of an ‘Open Door’ policy on China was an emblematic event. It amounted, for Chinese scholars, to ‘converting the whole of China into a colony’. One chapter examines Chinese migration into the US, which commenced in 1848, with 200,000 Chinese arriving in the US by 1884. They were needed for railway construction, but were also resented for various reasons, and many went back. Between 1882 and 1912, US Congress passed 15 acts to control their entry and for their exclusion, but a Chinese diaspora took root; by 1940 the numbers had reached 77,000.

Part II. China’s First Republic (1912–28) saw the US and China ‘brought closer’ and the lessons of that time have ‘important implications...for advocates of democracy and civil society in China today’. Dong Wang narrates US efforts during Second World War to mediate between Chiang and Mao, for more effective resistance against the Japanese, and the role played by General Stilwell, and Mao’s peace overtures to the US. In May 1949, Huang Hua told US Ambassador John Stuart that Mao and Zhou would personally welcome him to Beijing if he were to visit Yenjing University (where he had earlier been president). But this is contradicted in a subsequent assertion that

'Chinese Communist Party leaders were in no rush to procure American and "imperialist" recognition' of the PRC.

Of special interest is a chapter titled 'Agents of Encounter' that examines the role of non-state actors in the bilateral relationship in this period, including Wellington Koo, Pearl Buck, Edgar Snow and Chen Xujing (the last named an advocate of thoroughgoing Westernisation in China). Through all these activities, China became an object of extraordinary US attention; no other country in that era of colonisation received such foreign investment in education, science and social resources. One is left wondering if US antipathy to communism in that era had been less strident, how might a China-US relationship have shaped, if right wing elements had not pushed it into abandoning a relatively neutral stance it had adopted towards Chiang and Mao during Second World War, and immediately after.

Part III. The author holds that the normalisation in China-US relations, commencing in 1971 and realised fully only in the early 1990s, was driven by 'the emergence of a new power structure in the world and the changing domestic situation in both countries'. His description of this process, commencing with the soundings made by the US through Pakistan and Romania in 1970, Kissinger's two Beijing visits in July and October 1971, Nixon's presidential trip of February 1972, culminating in full restoration of diplomatic ties and Deng's January 1979 visit to the US cover well-trodden ground, and lacks in new insight.

A chapter on the 'China Market and the Allure of America' deals with the expectations of the two sides in the 1980s. While only 1,500 Americans visited China between 1949 and 1971, by 1987 the total had soared to 300,000; some 30,000 Chinese students were studying in America. This latter phenomenon has no parallel in international relations: notwithstanding persisting mutual distrust, over 1.1 million Chinese have studied abroad and returned (out of 2.6 million that went out); the majority studied in the US. In the reverse direction, numbers are smaller, but growing fast (in 2012, China had 320,000 foreign students, the majority from the US). These US students, counterparts to Chinese 'sea turtles' (as returned students are called), do not occupy positions of eminence, as do the Chinese.

Dong Wang's overall conclusion: the US 'often had the upper hand in the relationship, while China—as the rising power—has been challenged to limit America's regional and international reach'. Despite quarrels, 'for the most part they have managed their uneasy relationship in a rational manner'. The final chapter, 'China's Catch-Up', focuses on the bilateral economic relationship within the Asian context. It also juxtaposes a 'proselytizing' America against a 'cultural' China, to argue that in world affairs, against the normative prescriptions that emerge from the US (on human rights, religion and politics), China is content to offer its cultural personality, spreading its civilisational influence. This latter claim is simplistic. Only two aspects of culture are mentioned, China's actions to preserve heritage, and the spread of Confucius Institutes to over 90 countries. The problems that these Institutes have faced, over academic autonomy from the perspective of the host universities, and their self-limitation to teaching the Chinese language, are not mentioned.

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A deeper examination of projection of culture to win friends abroad would also have required attention to China's public diplomacy and soft power projection.

Factoids: Between August 1955 and February 1970, 136 ambassadorial meetings took place between China and the US. At the end of the Cultural Revolution, which is mildly called a 'social convulsion', per capita income in China was RMB76, less than US\$10, according to a Chinese source. Some niggles. Certainly, in 1900, Indians were among the foreign forces that relieved legation staff besieged by the Boxers, but to blandly lump them with the Western and Japanese troops does disservice to the factual position of a colonised India.

This book is a historical analysis, and it is unfair to judge it via the optic of the insights it offers on the contemporary scene. Even with this caveat, one expected the concluding section, including the two-page epilogue, to be more robust than it turns out. But all in all, the book is a splendid addition to a subject that will long preoccupy scholars of international affairs.

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RESHMA PATIL, *Strangers Across the Border: Indian Encounters in Boomtown China* (India: HarperCollins Publishers, 2014), pp. 256, ₹499, P-ISBN: 978-93-5136-170-1

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There are different ways to understand various cultures; travel and researching deep into the sources can be one method. However, one of the easiest methods is to read a well-written book. Reshma Patil's book on China, *Strangers Across the Border*, adds to a long list of books published by journalists who have served in China. Her ability to speak Mandarin has certainly helped her in understanding the changes taking place in present-day China.

Patil's stay in China covers the period from April 2008 to late 2011, during which time she could travel and cover in detail a variety of issues, especially matters relating to India. This phase was crucial to China and the world at large in different ways. During the early part of the 21st century, the economic juggernaut unleashed by China through its export-led growth seemed to be unstoppable. The crisis in the banking and realty sectors that commenced in 2008 in the US, led to the slowing down of most export destinations in the West. This has compelled the Chinese to take a relook at the pattern of their development and reorient the economy towards augmenting domestic consumption. As a journalist, Patil had a ringside seat to observe most of these readjustments. At another level she was able to interact with some of the key decision makers as well as a variety of ordinary citizens affected by these developments.