

Book Reviews

DEBASISH CHAUDHURI, *Xinjiang and the Chinese State: Violence in the Reform Era* (Delhi: Routledge 2018), pp. 330, ₹1095, ISBN: 9781138106352.

Central Asia was once characterised as the ‘geographical pivot of history’ and Xinjiang as the pivot of Asia. Their salience has ebbed and flowed in the last century but, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dramatic rise of China, this region seems poised to assume a new kind of pivotal role, the full extent of which is only beginning to unfold. Key to any such future will be the stable, secure and harmonious development of China’s Xinjiang region.

Indian scholarship on Xinjiang is relatively sparse, so Dr. Chaudhuri’s work fills an important void. He explores ‘the nature of the Uyghur-led movements and China’s overall record of dealing with minorities in general and with the Xinjiang problem in particular during the reform period’ (p. 8). His focus is on the nature of the Chinese state, the implications of party ideology, leadership attitudes and predilections affecting policies towards Xinjiang as well as the attitudes and actions of the dominant community in carrying forward an ‘exclusionist development strategy in Xinjiang’. Notwithstanding the rapid modernisation achieved in the Autonomous Region (AR) during the reform period, he says the central government’s reliance on indiscriminate and excessive state coercion has complicated the situation by overplaying its security and stability concerns, even though it is amply evident today that ‘the feasibility of the notion of an independent Xinjiang is questionable’. (p. 3)

While official accounts claim Xinjiang was part of China for 2,000 years without interruption, Chaudhuri sees the early pre-historical accounts essentially as historical myths. The formal incorporation of the region came only under the Qing dynasty in 1884. Since the republican era, the strong assertion of Han superiority has continued and for most Chinese colonisation of minority regions was considered a progressive policy. In its early years, the CCP sought to combine patriotism and anti-imperialist struggle with internationalism, but its emergence as liberator and unifier of all China

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left the Uyghur and other minorities objects of assimilation and absorption in a Han-dominated national state. Scholars like Fei Xiaotong rationalised this policy by stressing the ‘cohesive force’ of a Han-centred Chinese national identity in minority areas. Chaudhuri comments that few Chinese saw the irony of their being seen playing a coloniser’s role, carrying a ‘Yellow Man’s burden’. (p. 92) Indeed, as the demographic balance in the autonomous region changed from 80 per cent Uyghurs in 1945 to approximately 45–46 per cent from the 1980s, Chinese demographers began to devise unique indicators like a ‘sinicisation’ index of ethnic groups (p. 126) and to draw meaningless distinctions between ‘national blending’ (*minzuronghe*) and assimilation (*minzuttonghua*) of minorities. By essentialising the Han framework of Chinese identity, and criticising minority attachment to their religion, custom or language as inimical to the larger vision of Chinese national unity, the regime hardwired an exceptionalism that only widened the gap between the communities.

The modern Uyghur identity, though shaped by a range of religious affiliations of pre-modern times, was heavily influenced by the Turkish and Muslim world and the independence movements of the first half of the twentieth century—especially the resurgent Eastern Turkestan movement. The author underlines, however, that it was not uniformly separatist or anti-Chinese, and, during the open atmosphere of the 1980s, many Uyghurs ‘were willing to negotiate with the official nationalist interpretation of their past and present’ (p. 104) However, the continued estrangement was the result of the exclusionist statist approach adopted by the central leaders and their assertion of majoritarian nationalism.

The author details the economic, political and strategic objectives that shaped Beijing’s policy of population transfers and migration to Xinjiang, the role played by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corporation and the sufferings these regions endured in the Cultural Revolution years. Some improvement came with second-generation leaders like Hu Yaobang but, he says, the central leadership remained ambivalent and, post-1989, imposed rigid curbs over a range of political, religious and cultural issues affecting the minority peoples.

While subsidies and preferential policies were projected as benefiting the minorities, the author says they had less to do with the betterment of the minority communities than with the development of the territory and favoured the Han outsiders. For Xinjiang this meant sending out raw materials and energy resources at low prices and importing industrial products from the eastern coastal areas at high market prices. Though by 2000 Xinjiang was ranked 12 among 31 provinces, its overall prosperity concealed huge intra-regional, inter-ethnic as well as urban-rural disparities. Even the measures for the education and training of minorities, the 1980 marriage law, the 1986 election law as well as other central and local laws and regulations that existed on paper were, the author says, lacking in clear ‘legality’ (*falü zeren*) and thus of questionable utility (pp. 113–5).

As the trust gap between the communities grew, the episodic disturbances morphed into more hardened protests allegedly by new separatist and fundamentalist

forces, which erupted in April 1990 in anti-Han Chinese riots in Baren in south-western Xinjiang. In the seventh chapter, the author discusses extensively the various incidents, provocations and effects of the protests of the eighties, the upsurge of violence between 1990 and 2001 as well as the ruthless measures taken to curb these threats through strike hard policies of ‘stability maintenance’. Attacking the three evils of ‘terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism’, central officials argued that the AR was being subjected to incitement by organisations like the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) that advocated secession from China. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks in the USA, China joined the ‘global coalition against terrorism’ and redefined the Xinjiang situation as part of the issue of global terrorism. Yet, to the domestic audience, the government kept suggesting that its crackdown was aimed only at a few ‘core members and criminals’ and that the vast majority of Uyghurs were not anti-government and would be helped to get back to the true path of national welfare.

The formation of the Shanghai Five (later Shanghai Cooperation Organization), is also covered in some detail to show how it helped China leverage its Central Asian neighbours towards regional cooperation in suppressing trans-border Islamic insurgent activity. This collaboration helped China to obtain the detention and deportation of prominent Uyghur exiles in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and to use its increased influence to get officials and popular groups in countries like Uzbekistan and Turkey to discourage contacts with Uyghur organisations. But, by casting Uyghur separatism as part of the global war on terror, the state had effectively securitised the issue, raised its international profile, and widened the gap between the communities.

Since assuming power, Xi Jinping has articulated his vision of a ‘Chinese Dream’ nationally and an ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to connect China with the outside world. This project seeks to exploit Xinjiang’s ‘geographic advantages’ to facilitate the country’s ‘westward opening up’. But the Party’s ‘social management’ continues to be zero-sum and today includes more ‘comprehensive supervision’ through hi-tech surveillance and tracking of Uyghur neighbourhoods. As Chaudhuri says, the new leadership’s minority policy is not only devoid of freshness but lacks any innovative edge. Xi does not seem inclined to ‘devise any alternative and suitable antidote to the Uyghurs’ separatist violence, ethno-nationalism and social unrest’ (p. 267). What this portends for the future of BRI and Xinjiang’s pivotal role thus remains unclear.

In sum, Dr. Chaudhuri has produced a rigorously researched and balanced work that adds to Routledge’s already formidable collection of writings on Central Asia.

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CHI LO, *Demystifying China's Mega Trends: The Driving Forces That Will Shake Up China and the World* (Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2017), pp. 260+xviii, US\$98.26, ISBN: 9781787144101

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The very idea of demystifying China invokes an image of an unknown territory concealed behind the mist of secrecy. Our knowledge about the country is opaque partly because of inaccurate analysis, as well as inadequate understanding of China's development path. Chi Lo's book offers a penetrating and sensible analysis of China's structural reforms over the years, as well as mega trends in its economy and their implications in the global economic context.

China's macroeconomic mega trends have spurred contending narratives of China's growth trajectory. Some envisage the emergence of a new superpower and the decline of the USA in the world, whereas others foresee 'apocalyptic' economic crises in China (p. 27). There is, however, another proposition that China's efforts to make a transition from middle-income to high-income status would be challenging due to domestic as well as external factors. The notion of an indefinite stagnation of development at the middle-income level due to exogenous forces, referred to as the 'middle-income trap', has been discarded in some studies (p. 41). The author expresses confidence in the Chinese system despite the numerous challenges it faces. It has so far proved its capacity to adjust to changes, and there is enough reason to believe that it would overcome middle-income inertia.

The author takes cognisance of similarities in certain aspects of the Japanese and Chinese economies, such as their rise to the position of the world's second largest economies through export-oriented growth; each has been widely perceived as a threat to the US economic, financial and political dominance. The dynamics of China's economic development in per capita GDP is quite like that of Japan's in the early 1970s. Similarly, China's demographic trend (the ratio between the working age population and retirees) resembles Japan's in the 1980s. Also, China's financial development today is like Japan's development since the 1990s. The author also highlights features of the two economies that are quite different from each other (p. 33–6). Only the future will tell whether at a later stage China's development trajectory would go the Japanese way. Nevertheless the author sees real danger in the arrogance of the Chinese leadership and officialdom over the country's economic achievements. Like Japan earlier, China now boasts of its development model (p. 37–8).

As early as 2007, Premier Wen Jiabao sensed that China would not be able to attain the target of building a moderately prosperous society by relying on supply-side reforms, which had kept the country in a high growth orbit for three decades. The core idea behind Xi's structural reforms has its origin in Premier Wen's critique of a producer-led model of economic development. The weakness of Chinese economy include problems

related to excess capacity, capital micro-allocation, expensive *renminbi* exchange rate, urbanisation, reverse migration, the need for growing expenditure to combat pollution and other environmental problems, an aging population and a shrinking labour force. The book captures the new mega trends marked by the structural adjustment to consumption-led growth model under Xi Jinping's reform agenda, which focuses on changing the macroeconomic policy objective from 'chasing growth quantity' to 'attaining growth quality' (p. 73).

It was during the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) of 2007–08 that the leadership began to ponder over a new consumer-led growth model. The 'new normal' growth rate has been set between 6 per cent and 7 per cent which requires a shift from the industry-based factor-driven model to a service-based and innovation-driven growth model. The problem in achieving this goal is rooted in prolonged excess capacity, which according to the author has had deeper implications for the Chinese economy than is generally understood.

Since the country has embarked on the path of economic liberalisation in the late 1970s, the system instilled 'animal spirits' in business and consumption behaviour among people, which served as the driving force for economic development for many years. The author claims that 'China's excess-capacity problem has become so severe that it is killing the country's "animal spirit"' and eroding private sector investment incentives, leading to under-investment (p. 74).

Another major worry about the Chinese economy is the rapid accumulation of debt since the global financial crisis of 2008. China has very little foreign debt. In fact, two-thirds of China's total debt is corporate sector debt which is mainly concentrated in the inefficient state-owned enterprises (SOEs). This problem is quite difficult to estimate because of shadow banking. In order to avoid a possible debt currency disaster, deleveraging has been given priority in China's structural reform program. But the debt problem may linger because of the dilemma involved in selling off SOEs, especially the central government SOEs (p. 105–7). The author asserts that cutting 'the lifeline of the zombie companies together with a strategy of restructuring the salvageable firms' is the only way to tackle China's debt problem (p. 133).

After critically analysing macroeconomic trends, possibilities of stagnation and risks of economic identity crisis in the reform process, demographic challenges, excess capacity, under-investment and a possible explosion of a 'debt bomb' and deleveraging, the author tackles capital account liberalisation and its global impact, as well as the emerging mega trends in the following five chapters.

The author contends that opening up China's capital account will have a significant impact on the world economy because of the shift to China-operated new economic and policy paradigms and its 'half-baked' convertibility approach, which exhibit 'Beijing's conflicting objectives of opening up and retaining control'. On the basis of an argument made in the Mundell–Fleming model that it is impossible for a country to have control of all three variables (namely the exchange rate, free capital

flows and interest rate) at the same time, the author claims that ‘capital account convertibility will force Beijing into a policy choice dilemma between monetary autonomy and exchange rate control’. The risks in the process of opening up capital account could engender unpremeditated fallouts, not only in China but also in the global system (pp. 135–6).

The book identifies three emerging trends growing out of the capital account liberalisation trend: emigration of Chinese capital in the form of overseas investment, lending, portfolio investment and arbitrage activities; the Belt and Road initiative (BRI), which is a crucial part of China’s capital outflow dynamics, as also Beijing’s currency globalisation and economic rebalancing strategies; and making the *renminbi* a global currency. The author’s insightful commentary on these issues gives greater insight into the new structural reforms to revamp the Chinese economy. Some of the policies were initiated during the last phase of the Hu-Wen era, but were later brought within the grand rubric of the ‘Chinese Dream’.

The book is a timely contribution to the study of China’s economy which, because of its energetic outreach globally, has created enthusiasm as well as confusion among people around the world.

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CHUNLAI CHEN, *Foreign Direct Investment and the Chinese Economy: A Critical Assessment* (UK and US: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017), pp. 214, US\$114.6, ISBN: 9781785369728.

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China’s economic growth owes greatly to a well-considered strategy of leveraging foreign direct investments (FDI) through special economic zones in coastal areas, followed by opening up the hinterland, with provinces competing for projects. Chunlai Chen explores the impact of FDI on the Chinese economy, with detailed data and econometric analysis, across three dimensions—regional growth and interregional growth, income inequality in urban and rural areas within and across regions and urbanisation trends via interregional analysis. Chen is an Associate Professor at the Australian National University, working on China’s FDI experience for over two decades. The book deploys empirical and theoretical analysis to uncover China’s FDI evolution and policy experience that would be relevant for other emerging economies. For India, where FDI has been less successful, this is a useful compendium.

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The book's uniqueness lies in its strong analysis of regional distribution of FDI and its impact on growth, inequality and urbanisation through various econometric models using a provincial-level panel dataset to examine both direct and indirect effects. This reviewer is not qualified to verify the many mathematical models used in the book; however, the conclusions of the study validate intuitive observations about the impact of FDI. Theoretically, FDI, apart from adding to investment, is known to bring other positive effects, including better technology, demonstration impact, supply chain competitiveness and improved management practices. Chen details the existing literature on the relationship of FDI with growth, income inequality, urbanisation, and interregional effects in developing countries, to establish the hypotheses for his study.

'The growth of FDI inflows into China from 1979 to 2015 can be broadly divided into three phases: the experimental phase from 1979 to 1991; the boom phase from 1992 to 2001; and the post-WTO phase from 2002 to 2015' (p. 2). In the first phase, the average annual FDI was only US\$1.79 billion; after Deng Xiaoping's seminal tour of the south, this went up to US\$27.52 billion in 1993 and higher until the Asian financial crisis hit. By 2016, the figure had reached US\$139 billion. The eastern region has been the largest recipient of foreign inflows with over 85 per cent in the period 1983–2014, led by Guangdong and Fujian. The central and western regions display flat FDI trajectories, with a slight uptick from 2006 onwards.

'FDI has contributed to China's economic growth directly through capital augmentation and technological progress and indirectly through knowledge spillovers on the local economy' (p. 38), depending on local economic and technological conditions. FDI contributed more to growth in developed coastal provinces than in the hinterland regions where the lack of knowledge absorption hinders productivity gains. The author concludes that such regional inequalities should be addressed through higher investments in education and infrastructure, plus interregional migration and investments.

The book then explores the impact of FDI in one province on growth rates in other provinces. It confirms that, in general, FDI in the coastal regions has negatively impacted growth in the inland provinces as these have lost out in the competition for scarce investments. This is especially true where the FDI in the coastal province has been involved in high levels of processing trade. On the other hand, ordinary trade in FDI-attracting coastal provinces has had positive benefits for inland provinces due to stronger linkages between the two regions. The policy implications are that China should increase such industrial linkages and build local sourcing networks to boost such benefits.

Similar exercises are undertaken for determining the influence of FDI on urban and rural incomes. Knowledge accretion due to the movement of workers from rural to urban areas reduced disparities. However, trade liberalisation increased rural–urban income inequalities as manufacturing sectors, rather than agriculture, gained from external engagement. This suggests that policies for encouraging FDI in industry in inland regions are required, accompanied by higher investments in education and

faster urbanisation through reform of the household registration system. The study extrapolates this finding by delving into interregional impacts of FDI on locational income inequalities with mixed results. It emphasises that implementation of One Belt One Road (OBOR) policy would improve the investment climate of hinterland regions, thereby reducing income disparities.

The third plank of the book relates to urbanisation, which, according to the author, needs to be accelerated for higher economic growth with structural transformation. This is implemented through the New Urbanization Plan instituted in 2014. Prefecture city-level data for 262 prefecture cities is used for empirical study of FDI impact on host cities as well as interregional impact on urbanisation in interior regions. Intuitively, FDI in coastal regions would have a negative fallout on urbanisation in inland provinces, and the massive migration of workers from interior regions to coastal regions is one of the well documented trends in Chinese economy and society. This hypothesis is validated by the extensive analysis through various models undertaken by the author, showing that city evolution was slower in the hinterland.

A summary of policy recommendations is provided in the concluding chapter and this has useful suggestions for other emerging economies taking the foreign investment route to growth. Focused more on econometric modelling, the book does not list the many policies that China introduced to incentivise FDI, which might clarify why 85 per cent of FDI flowed into coastal regions rather than the hinterland. China's strategy was to leverage geographical advantages of the coastline to link with global markets. While the author mentions the need for boosting education and absorption capacity for attracting FDI in inland provinces, infrastructure connectivity, availability of large markets and other factors also need to be stressed.

In India, the world's other large emerging economy, FDI has picked up considerably since 2005–06, with almost two-fifths of inflows of US\$532 billion since April 2000 coming from 2014–15 onwards.¹ Most of this has been in the services sectors rather than manufacturing, in contrast to China. Regional disparities in FDI are prevalent, as Delhi and Mumbai account for over half the total inflows, similar to China's experience. As India does not have special zones with tailored FDI policies as evolved in China, it must be surmised that overseas investors seek conducive factors other than policy environment, possibly relating to infrastructure, human development and supply chain efficiencies, which might have been available in Delhi and Mumbai and not in other states. A comprehensive analysis of FDI trends in India, using Chen's methods, would improve our understanding and contribute to policymaking.

The book's value lies in the rigorous data analysis and its potential contribution to the theoretical aspects of FDI that are relevant for emerging economies. It is an important addition to economic literature on this topic.

¹ Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, Fact Sheet on FDI from April 2000 to December 2017 published on 21 February 2018 http://dipp.nic.in/sites/default/files/FDI_FactSheet_21February2018.pdf

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DAVID B.H. DENOON (ed.), *China, the United States, and the future of Southeast Asia* (New York: New York University Press, 2017), pp. 464, \$35, ISBN: 978-1-4798-1032-1

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Because of the time taken between the submission of a manuscript and its publication, any writer on current international affairs faces the occupational hazard of partial obsolescence before his work sees the light of day. The fast moving events in China, the United States and Southeast Asia inevitably may require a few of the contributors to the book under review to take a fresh view on their work. The editor, David BH Denoon, refers to one such development in his Preface: the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in favour of the Philippines. The Preface was obviously written before the election of President Donald Trump—whose name does not even figure in the Index—and so obviously, the writers have not taken into account the uncertainties *he* has introduced. Having said that, it is a tribute alike to the depth of understanding of issues displayed by most authors and the enduring nature of the main elements in relationship between China, USA and Southeast Asia that the book still remains very relevant in most respects.

Besides the Introduction and Conclusion by Denoon, the book is divided into three parts—Overview, Southeast Asian Perspectives and Outside Powers—with contributions by 14 scholars.

Denoon reminds us that ASEAN states have been transformed from ‘dominoes to dynamos’. Vikram Nehru in his extremely informative chapter evocatively titled ‘Southeast Asia: Thriving in the Shadow of Giants’, gives us a very good idea of how this has happened. He presents a balanced picture of both why he thinks the future of ASEAN states is bright (including the opportunities presented by the rise of the two neighbouring giants, India and China), as also of the challenges, especially those posed by the increasing assertiveness of China.

In the second part of the book, we have perspectives from each of the ASEAN countries, with most chapters by established scholars from the respective countries. Evan A Laksmana describes Indonesia’s foreign policy approach as ‘pragmatic equidistance’. One wishes he had dealt a little more with ‘the growing view that as long as Jakarta is “caged” by ASEAN it will always punch below its weight’ (p. 131).

Giving the view from Singapore, Yee-Kuang Heng, quotes a ‘wry observation’ of the founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew who in 2009 said: ‘Small countries have little influence on international trends. Singapore has always taken the world as it is.

We analyse the world clinically, take advantage of opportunities that come our way or get out of harm's way' (p. 151). All said and done, given its vulnerabilities which the author emphasizes, Singapore has done rather well for itself!

Tran Truon Thuy gives us a lucid exposition in his chapter of Vietnam's relations with China and the United States. He makes no secret of Vietnam's troubles with China, going to the extent of saying: 'Due to the maritime territorial dispute, the sharing of ideologies between Vietnam and China has become irrelevant in today's context' (p. 173). However, he points out that even while building a wide-ranging relationship with the USA, Vietnam is careful not to provoke China, in keeping with the traditional proverb: 'distant water cannot put out a nearby fire' (p. 163).

Given the central theme of the book it is not surprising that the third part of the book, dealing with 'Outside Powers', concentrates on Southeast Asia's relations with China and the United States. At the same time, it also devotes a chapter each to relations with Japan and India, the former authored by Edward J. Lincoln, and that on India by G.V.C. Naidu and Gulshan Sachdeva.

Lincoln's chapter, though full of useful data, is not entirely fair to Japan, describing Japan's policy towards Southeast Asia until 1990 as characterised by 'gratuitous condescension' (p. 249). He goes on to argue that under Abe it is now motivated primarily by 'his antagonism towards China', rather than because friendly relations with ASEAN 'is economically beneficial to Japan or because friendly relations with neighbours make intuitive sense' (p. 258).

Naidu and Sachdeva trace the emergence of India's Look East Policy and its evolution into Act East policy, leading to India gradually transitioning from a marginal to a more significant actor in the region. They are right when they say that many Southeast Asian countries see India as a counterweight to China, but the realistic analysts of that region are aware of the great power differential at present.

Chen Shaofeng of Peking University in his 'China's economic approach to ASEAN' makes the interesting argument that China concluded the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement 'primarily out of political considerations, notwithstanding a modest economic benefit from the deal...' (p. 306). This, he feels, led China into making unilateral concessions.

Chu Shulong, a professor in the other famous university of Beijing, Tsinghua, has a chapter on 'China and the United States in Southeast Asia'. He feels that China has no clear regional strategy in Asia, pointing out that none of the Asian multilateral frameworks, such as APEC, ASEAN Plus Three, ARF and the East Asia Summit, have been initiated by China. Giving a Chinese perspective, he claims that after China and ASEAN signed the agreement on the Principles of Code of Conduct in 2002, there were no big troubles in the South China Sea, 'but the Americans invented trouble there...' (p. 345). He declares that China will defend its security and sovereignty even if that means war with the United States.

The two chapters about the USA's policies relating to Southeast Asia, written before Trump replaced Obama's 'pivot' with his new national security strategy, naturally

require revision, but the basic issues generated by China's nine-dash-line-based South China Sea claims remain.

Some authors, including Denoon, have expressed some scepticism about the role of ASEAN. More persuasive are observers like Kishore Mahbubani and Jeffery Sng, whose new book is entitled: *The ASEAN Miracle: A Catalyst for Peace*. As Mahbubani pointed out at the launch of this book in Delhi in January 2018, though the members of the ASEAN have not been willing to surrender their respective sovereignty, they have collectively succeeded in creating 'an ecosystem of peace'.

In some ways, the essence of the analyses offered by various scholars on the triangular China, USA and ASEAN relations is captured by Ann Marie Murphy. Her chapter on ASEAN's foreign policy points out that it is largely based on soft power, and its success is dependent upon an underlying balance of power in the region. Murphy concludes: '...if the United States and China are unable to manage their power transition peacefully, it will be increasingly difficult for ASEAN to craft an effective external policy that maintains Southeast Asia's stability and autonomy' (p. 51). Most ASEAN countries want continued American presence but simultaneously seek to maintain optimal relations with China, combining intensified economic relations with a wary eye on the political and security implications of its rising assertiveness in the region.

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JOSEPH P. McDERMOTT AND PETER BURKE (eds.), *The Book Worlds of East Asia and Europe, 1450–1850: Connections and Comparisons* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), pp. xx+362, \$80.00/£62.00, ISBN: 978-9-88820-808-1.

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It is not surprising to observe that there is a long tradition of book study in China, the country with probably the longest history of printing. The origin of this tradition can be traced back to the cataloguing efforts of Liu Xiang (ca. 79–76 BCE), and it reached an apex in the last decades of the twentieth century, when Chinese and Japanese scholars produced a host of insightful studies on the origin and historical development of printing, paper production, publishing and the physical evolution of modern books in China. Such approaches to the study of the book in China are evidently inspired by the large corpus of debates and bibliophiles on the European book and book culture, designated as the 'history of the book' (*histoires du livre*). Yet to the present, there have been regrettably only few attempts to synthesise these issues through a comparative examination of printing and book culture in East Asia and Europe.

The Book Worlds of East Asia and Europe, 1450–1850: Connections and Comparisons, edited by Joseph P. McDermott and Peter Burke, is a timely addition. The comparative approach adopted in this volume is certainly ‘neither as new nor as novel as might be thought’ (p. 4), as McDermott and Burke acknowledge, but they take a step forward by having six leading experts on East Asian and European book history explore issues of mutual interest, thus filling a lacuna by offering an analysis on the development of book production, distribution and consumption in these two regions of Eurasia, which ‘in pre-modern times made the most of publishing books’, from ‘a consciously comparative perspective’ (p. 5). The time span that the volume covers, from 1450 to 1850, includes the four centuries of the rise of the Gutenberg revolution in Europe and the proliferation of woodblock printing in East Asia before the introduction of European printing technologies.

The volume opens with an extensive introduction, which investigates how many of the issues examined in this collection can be revealed through what recent French studies have called *histoire croisée* (connected history). McDermott and Burke adopt this approach to examine how it can inform interlinked reflections of the issues discussed in the volume through a profound review of the likelihood of the transmission of printing technology (woodblock and moveable-type westward, and Western printing-press eastward), of the knowledge transfer brought about by this technological exchange, and the history of sharing the common sense of current events through printing. In doing so, the editors offer a clear ground for discussion of a comparative ‘book world’ consisting of the network of people and institutions in East Asia and Europe that ‘supported and sometimes restricted the production, diffusion, and consumption of books’ (p. 9).

Certainly, the authors of the chapters are fully aware that the pre-1850 book worlds of East Asia and Europe often interacted only indirectly or intermittently, so they have pursued different strategies to show how these separate histories can still inform each other. In the first two chapters, David McKittrick and Joseph McDermott focus on distinctive features of book production in East Asia and Europe, in particular the bibliographical practices and non-commercial publishing. While McKittrick cogently reminds us that bibliographical statistics should be used with great care,

McDermott shows that the growth of publishing in late imperial China was largely shaped by the rise of capitalism and the development of an integrated culture of ‘a public sphere’. Peter Kornicki and Peter Burke take up direct comparison of consumption practices in the two regions, concentrating on the increase of female readers and books published for women, the contents and reception of imprints in the vernacular, as well as the rise of reference books and the cultural and social background of their production and consumption. Focusing primarily on economic aspects of book distribution, James Raven and Cynthia Brokaw, in the final two chapters, collectively demonstrate how the comparative approach can reveal the advantages and disadvantages of different economic organisations in facilitating long-distance trade of books.

Although the core of this volume consists of only six chapters, each has directly or indirectly woven into his or her analysis the perspective adopted in the others’ studies,

and one can easily identify that each is deeply informed by one another's findings in a way rarely seen in collections of multi-author comparative research. The volume stands as a vivid example of 'interconnectivity' and demonstrates how fruitful such interconnectivity can be: it raises questions previously overlooked and places set conclusions again under scrutiny, extending the perspectives beyond the dimension of the expertise of each. In many respects, the findings emerging from these finely interwoven studies of the pre-1850 book worlds are still valid. Although the world of text has been undergoing transformation from printed to electronic publishing, the role of the state is still vital; certain types of books are preferred as before, the activities of private publishers cannot be neglected, and books are still considered as a way to fulfil social obligations.

Many of the issues this volume covers inspire reflection and will surely stimulate future comparative studies of other fields. For scholars on European and East Asian books, learning about the history of printing and its impact in other regions can offer a valuable counterpoint to the tendency to universalise one's experience. Yet critical readers may expect elaborations on other issues that are of equal importance as those dealt with in the volume. For instance, whereas we can estimate rates of literacy in early modern Europe by using figures of book production, it is to be explored as to what extent the increase in the production of printed books in Ming-Qing China correlated with changes in readership and literacy rates. Although cultural historians have recently begun to probe into the multifaceted impact of printing on reading habits, literary composition, and knowledge transformation in China, how would texts other than encyclopaedias, such as notebooks, jottings and correspondence, help facilitate a more systematic comprehension of the ways in which printing affected reading experience and literary production? How did the expansion of printing in Ming-Qing China contribute to the unlocking of the rigorous relationship between the state, the educated elite and the Confucian orthodoxy? Did the printed medium loosen or sharpen social distinctions, and did it enhance or restrict social mobility? All these await further exploration.

Certainly it seems unfair to require so many aspects to be discussed in this fine collection, which consists of well-researched and eloquently written chapters. Offering a comparative survey of the relations between the two most active book worlds in Eurasia between 1450 and 1850, it demonstrates many feasible strategies to discuss key issues of comparative study and offers directions for writing transnational history. It will definitely attract both academic and general readers interested in book culture, publishing history, and European and Asian history.

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AVTAR SINGH BHASIN (ed.), *India–China Relations 1947–2000: A Documentary Study* (Five volumes) (New Delhi: Geetika Publishers, 2018), p. 5318 + cccxviii, ₹15,000, ISBN: 978-93-81417-14-0.

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This voluminous collection includes 2,523 documents, compiled over a 5-year span by A.S. Bhasin, formerly of the Ministry of External Affairs's Historical Division, who has to his credit a 10-volume compilation of India–Pakistan documents, and similar multi-volume archival material covering India's relations with Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, as well as ASEAN, and annual compilations of official Indian documents covering the years 2002–13.

Unlike the case with all the other compilations, Bhasin this time did not get access to the official Ministry of External Affairs papers, perhaps on the reasoning that because of the unresolved India–China border issue, publication would be inimical to Indian interests. Bhasin relied instead on the documents available at the Nehru Memorial Library, that is, material in the personal collections of Jawaharlal Nehru and many other Indian foreign policy actors, which is now open for access by scholars.

In net terms, a wealth of new material is offered, which will be chewed over by researchers in the coming months and years; it will hopefully enrich, even inspire, new scholarship and PhD dissertations. As to the wider issue of public disclosure of sensitive material, several elements need examination. First, we seldom get access to the reasoning behind the policy actions narrated in what is published here. That data remains locked inside the closed dossiers. But some of the reasoning and elements behind the actions taken now become clearer, and this is a major net addition that helps our understanding. Second, Chinese counterpart documents have not been published. That is true, but diverse Chinese sources provide patchy access to information that gives an outline of the very complex jigsaw images. Some Chinese language material is now available via the personal memoirs of Chinese actors; some Politburo documents have been published in Hong Kong; and other sources, such as the Woodrow Wilson Center Digital Archive, also give access to relevant documents. For example, a priceless gem is the verbatim text of the Mao-Khrushchev encounter in Beijing of 2 October 1959, provided by Soviet sources to the Wilson collection; in it, India–China relations figure prominently. Third, might it be that the Indian documents, if seen in isolation, might give an unbalanced picture of the true story, by highlighting Indian failures, in the absence of insight into Chinese motivations or machinations? Yes, that is a danger; it will be the responsibility of scholars to provide balanced perspectives.

Against this is the immense benefit that comes from transparency, communicating especially to the Indian public the manner in which Indian actions evolved on China and on the Tibet issue. It thus becomes essential to build out of such a collection a holistic, rigorous and balanced understanding of those events. We have to depend

on scholars to individually and collectively work on this new material, to produce deeper insights.

The 1954 agreement was the very first major bilateral diplomatic encounter between the two independent states, producing an agreement ‘On Trade and Intercourse between the Tibetan Region of China and India’. It was signed on 29 April 1954, after 4 months of hard negotiations held exclusively in Beijing. When the talks began on 30 December 1953, both sides had spoken of producing an agreement in 2 weeks, to show to the world how these two Asian powers would handle their relationship. This preceded any direct conversation between Indian and Chinese leaders; it bears examination through the optic of the Bhasin papers, as a sample of the insights provided.

We find a Ministry of External Affairs note of 1 December 1953 setting out the negotiation ‘strategy’. A rigorous examination of India’s negotiation objectives is absent. Nor is there any assessment of Chinese objectives. The note is almost obsessive in urging that discussion on the border should be avoided. ‘As the Prime Minister has said the frontier question is the most important question ... so far as our Northern border is concerned it is well defined by usage, custom and history. It would, therefore, not be in our interest to open this question or give any indication that we are in doubt about our frontier’ (p. 970). And yet the note goes on: ‘There are a few other disputed areas like the Aksai plain in Ladakh, Hunza, Dakhpo-Garpo, Gritti, Nilang, Jodang, Towang, and Wolang which are shown as ours in our maps and by the Chinese as theirs in their maps ... we should not be prepared to give up any of these places except in return for an overall acceptance of our frontier by the Chinese’ (p. 970).

Three problems arise: first, should we not have anticipated that a liberated China would not countenance a continuation of the extraterritorial rights that colonial Britain enjoyed in Tibet—such as stationing of a garrison of some 150-armed soldiers, trade agencies and maintenance of rest houses, besides ‘treasuries’ and other properties? Second, we did not assess what China’s occupation of Tibet, which we readily accepted as unalterable, would produce over the next 5 or 10 years, in terms of Tibet–China economic links and how those links would largely spell the doom of India–Tibet border trade. And finally, above all, how could a unilateral assertion of our border pass muster when we were aware of significant disputed areas as evident in Chinese maps and a rising tempo of border confrontations?

In the event, the ink on the 1954 agreement was hardly dry before we faced the first incident of a Chinese incursion across what we understood as the border in July 1954, at Bara Hoti across the Niti Pass in the Middle Sector of the border. In preparing for the 1954 negotiations, no one in India had asked what China’s occupation of Tibet might mean in terms of Chinese troops coming to the border and how this might affect management of the border. We also did not consider the consequences on Indian political links in Tibet.

Above all, no one anticipated the impact on the Indian public of our dichotomous position—full awareness of the border dispute but repeated assertions that there was nothing to negotiate with China. It locked us into an increasingly rigid stance, and

public rigidity on our claim imprisoned us into rejection of the very notion of a compromise. The chronicles of the Nehru–Zhou talks of 1960, the secret message that Zhou conveyed in January 1963 through Chargé d'affaires PK Banerjee (*My Peking Memoirs of The Chinese Invasion of India*, 1990, pp. 87–101), and the border swap deal that China reiterated in the Vajpayee–Deng talks of 1978, the Eric Gonsalves talks of 1982 (see his Oral History), and the Rajiv Gandhi–Deng talks of 1988, simply became way-posts in this Greek tragedy.

How shall we un-ride the tiger of our own distorted public narrative? Perhaps archival material, as in this book, might help to reframe our public understanding. That is much needed, even if it is a slender hope.

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BERTIL LINTNER, *China's India War: Collision Course on the Roof of the World* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. xxviii + 320, ₹675, ISBN: 9780199475551.

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Bertil Lintner's '*China's India War*' clears many cobwebs and myths about the 1962 conflict that have stubbornly persisted. As its title suggests, the book is partly a rejoinder to Neville Maxwell's '*India's China War*'. Lintner effectively counters Maxwell's dubious thesis that though China might have attacked India in 1962, it was India that had provoked the war. He has argued that Maxwell's claim is based on an erroneous interpretation of the sequence of events, the nature and origins of the conflict and its geopolitical context.

The main plank of Maxwell's argument was that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's so-called 'forward policy' provoked the Chinese attack. As Lintner points out, Maxwell's version of events leading up to the 1962 conflict does not stand up to any serious scrutiny. The decision to establish posts in the Western Sector in particular was taken at a meeting chaired by Nehru on 2 November 1961. By that time, China had already decided to teach India a lesson and put in place extensive preparations, including considerable infrastructure in Tibet and along the borders with India, collection of intelligence, deployment of forces in Tibet, and so on. China's military build-up along the borders with India had begun shortly after the revolt in Tibet in March 1959, that is, nearly 30 months before the decision on establishment of additional posts was taken by Nehru.

Lintner also observes that China's own forward policy was much more assertive and aggressive than India's. Troops of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered Tibet in 1950 and soon thereafter, started advancing towards Tibet's borders with India.

In the early 1950s, the PLA moved up to the McMahon line boundary in the East, and thus we had the permanent presence of Chinese forces along the India–China border for the first time in history. In the West, the Chinese commenced creeping encroachments south of the Kunlun Mountains where China had never exercised any administrative jurisdiction until the construction of the Aksai Chin road. This determined nibbling in the Western Sector continued through the late 1950s and in 1960–61, and it was the primary reason for the Indian decision to set up posts and ‘patrol as far forward as possible’ to discourage further ingress by China. The decision might have been militarily ill-conceived, but these activities on what was perceived to be Indian territory, and mostly on the edge of the advance made by the PLA until then, can hardly be construed as constituting *casus belli*. There were some Indian posts behind Chinese posts, but that was not so extraordinary given the nature of the terrain. Even today, Indian and Chinese patrols overlap and sometimes they crisscross.

Lintner has sought to set the record straight on the origins of the McMahon Line, countering doubts cast by Maxwell and also by Alastair Lamb in his book on the subject (Lamb, 1966). The natural frontier between India and Tibet along the highest watershed in the East was confirmed at the Simla Conference of 1913–14 as the McMahon Line. As Lintner points out, nothing was negotiated behind the backs of the Chinese delegation, as China was to claim later. The Chinese were not fully involved in discussions about the details of the delineation of the Indo-Tibetan border, which was considered by the British and Tibet as a bilateral issue and therefore not a Chinese concern. In fact, the Chinese had not raised any reservations regarding the McMahon Line alignment and had initialled or signed the relevant maps. Indeed, they were primarily concerned about the border between China and Tibet which was the main point of contention during the 9 months of negotiations.

Lintner suggests that the origins of China’s decision to teach India a lesson lay in considerations other than the border dispute. These considerations include China’s quest for the leadership of the Third World by undermining India’s leadership credentials, the revolt in Tibet and the Dalai Lama’s flight to India, the economic turmoil within China and Mao Zedong’s efforts to reassert his leadership within the Communist Party of China, which was badly dented after the disastrous Great Leap Forward and the Sino-Soviet schism. The Cuban missile crisis and the preoccupation of the USA and the Soviet Union with it might have influenced the timing of the Chinese attack on 20 October 1962.

While all these considerations figured in the Chinese calculus, I believe that the boundary dispute was also an important contributing factor. Lintner is not correct in saying that the Chinese never intended to hold on to the captured territory. China was, in fact, keen to move up to its claim line in the Western Sector in particular because of strategic considerations. Though Lintner suggests that China vacated the territory it occupied during the 1962 conflict, it did so only in the Eastern Sector and not in the Western Sector. The present line of actual control in the West was formed as a result of China’s military advance in 1962.

China did withdraw in the Eastern Sector, but then, it has always differentiated between the borders in the East and the West. During Zhou Enlai's visit to India in 1960 and subsequently in Deng Xiaoping's so-called 'package proposal' of the early 1980s, China had indicated its readiness to accept the McMahon Line alignment in the East with some minor adjustments in return for India accepting the Chinese position in the West. It was only in 1985 that China claimed that the Eastern Sector was the area of the 'biggest dispute' where India must make 'substantive adjustments'.

Lintner detects direct parallels between the India–China boundary question and the territorial disputes in the South China Sea. In both cases, China has used force to secure its contested territorial claims derived from questionable 'historic rights'. In its award of 12 July 2015, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague concluded that China had no credible 'historic rights' over the South China Sea. Its territorial claims vis-à-vis India have equally questionable basis in historical evidence. 'China never controlled or ruled over any of the areas in India's northeast, which it today claims and includes in its maps, and the situation in the Spratly Islands ... is strikingly similar', Lintner notes (p. xxii). In the Western Sector of the India–China border and in the South China Sea, China created facts on the ground through unilateral actions, which have become the real basis of its claim.

Lintner brings out in some detail the roots of the sharpening differences between India and China. He suggests that a new 'great game' is being played out, founded on historic mistrust and current competition. It derives from the border dispute, the competition for influence in Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar, China's links with insurgent groups in the Northeast of India, its refusal to enter into cooperative arrangements on sharing of transborder rivers and the unfolding strategic rivalry in the Indian Ocean.

While Lintner's basic argument has merit, the elaboration of his position in the last four chapters of the book does not have the intensity of the first four chapters which deal with the 1962 conflict and its aftermath, though he does offer occasional insights into issues like China's continuing support to Indian insurgent groups.

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KAROL ZAKOWSKI, BEATA BOCHORODYCZ, AND MARCIN SOCHA, *Japan's Foreign Policy Making: Central Government Reforms, Decision-Making Processes, and Diplomacy* (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2018), pp. 242, €119.59, ISBN: 978-3-319-63093-9

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Japan's foreign policy posture has been undergoing a subtle but marked change, with the country pursuing a more active foreign policy in recent years, against the backdrop of the ongoing global power shifts. The country's foreign policy essentially stems from a commitment towards making positive contributions for a more peaceful world while protecting and promoting Japan's national interests. A critical aspect of this involves managing the domestic institutional constraints. This book uses well-researched information to provide new insight into Japan's foreign policymaking beyond the *Kantei*¹—Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)-ruling party paradigm.

The authors have used the framework of neoclassical realism to examine the impact of the 2001 central government reforms on enhancing the influence of the *Kantei* in foreign policy formulation and overcoming policy incoherence. Neoclassical realism acknowledges the significance of unit-level factors as well as factors such as state structure and elites' psychology in determining foreign policy responses, apart from external pressures. In the case of Japan, while the foreign policy formulation was influenced by external constraints, the decisions themselves were not predetermined by Japan's position in the international system; rather the international stimuli were heavily filtered through domestic factors and the constraints stemming from the 'pacifist' Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. The authors observe that the existence of powerful veto players has often put both formal and informal limitations of power on the prime ministers as well as the foreign ministers. In post-war Japan, the unwillingness of the MOFA bureaucrats to change the status quo has been cited as one of the reasons for the remarkable stability of Japan's foreign policy. Moreover, since the 1970s and 1980s, interest groups and business circles, representing the interests of different ministries and parliamentary tribes and acting through specialised Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) backbenchers, engaged in enhanced competition for influence on domestic policies. But in the era of globalisation their activities were in contradiction with the government's diplomatic endeavours. It is observed that though the *Kantei* appeared to be a coherent actor, in reality most of its administrative staff represented the interests of separate ministries. The authors go on to describe the internal frictions present within the MOFA, the parliamentary tribes and the political parties, thereby establishing that the lack of homogeneity in the institutions resulted in a contentious decision-making process in foreign policy formulation.

¹ The prime minister and his or her closest entourage.

The central government reforms were carried out in 2001 to augment the prime minister's and ministers' influence in policymaking. The authors contend that while the central government reforms could not effectively eliminate sectional struggles within MOFA and internal divisions in ruling parties, they did facilitate overcoming the *Kantei's* policy incoherence. The coherence of the *Kantei* varied from one administration to another, and the actual power of the prime ministers was greatly dependent on their leadership skills. Institutional changes improved the prime minister's relative position vis-a-vis competitive foreign policymaking venues, which resulted in a more independent *Kantei*-led diplomacy that was better equipped to exploit the internal divisions among the veto players, not vice versa. It is rightly observed that after the reforms, the office of the prime minister has become more powerful, and the image of the prime ministers among the general public has become a crucial factor wielding significant influence on the electoral chances of the ruling party. Some case studies from this book confirm that the prime ministers took public opinion into account when they made decisions on foreign policy. The current incumbent, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of the LDP, who retained a two-thirds majority with his coalition partner for the third time in the 2017 snap election, is popular for his government's economic policies (Abenomics) which promote monetary policy, fiscal stimulus and structural reforms designed to resolve Japan's macroeconomic problems. Though a conservative and a right-wing nationalist, his tenure as the third-longest serving Japanese prime minister in the post-war era is indicative of the success of the reforms.

The nine case studies in the book cover a wide array of security, economic, and diplomatic problems that emerged following the 2001 reforms. These include contentious issues of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) accession, war on terrorism, relations with China and North Korea, CO₂ emission reduction, East Asian Community creation, and so on. Each case study analyses the external and internal determinants of the policy in question and compares the role of the key actors during the pre- and post-reform period, the utility of the new institutional tools and the level of public support for the foreign policy decisions. The studies establish that Japan's foreign policy has been strongly influenced by contextual domestic-level factors. However, the authors do acknowledge that the general contour of Tokyo's behaviour on the international scene has also been considerably impacted by external determinants, such as the bipolar nature of the international system during the Cold War, the US grand strategy as well as Japan's relative economic and military potential. Japan has been watchful of the increasing Chinese domination in South Asia and its consequent geopolitical repercussions, as is evident from its foreign policy overtures. During the first Abe cabinet (2006–07), the central aim of the Arc of Freedom and Prosperity (AFP) was to 'establish Japan's democratic identity and cement its credentials as a reliable partner for the USA and other peer democracies, thereby widening its strategic position' (p. 123). The Japanese government tried to use this concept to attract other partners like Australia and India, which suited Japan's national interests. Abe has continued to focus on proactive diplomacy founded on 'strengthening partnerships with countries that

share the fundamental values of freedom, democracy, basic human rights and rule of law' (p. 124), citing examples of the ASEAN, Australia, India and European states.

While the book succeeds in establishing the significance of domestic factors in Japan's foreign policymaking, especially after the reforms, it does not reflect much on the internal working of the ruling parties and their impact on the future of foreign policymaking. It would have also added to the reader's interest to include a section on the proposed controversial revision of Japan's post-war pacifist constitution in a bid to end the debate over the constitutionality of Japan's military and analyse the interplay of the domestic and external stimuli with regard to the global implications of a fully militarised Japan.

Overall, the book provides a comprehensive account of the complex internal dynamics of Japan's foreign policymaking, embedded in the framework of neoclassical realism and substantiated with the help of relevant case studies. It is an excellent contribution to the scholarship on foreign policy and caters well to students and scholars of Japan's foreign policy interested in understanding the post-reforms transformation.

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