

worthwhile read for scholars in the fields of international relations and Asian studies. The field of Chinese studies continues to grow, and I am confident that we will see more of this kind of theoretically informed empirical study in the years to come.

QUANSHENG ZHAO

The Perils of Proximity: China–Japan Security Relations

RICHARD C. BUSH

Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010

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China–Japan relations are puzzling for international relations (IR) theory. While economic interdependence has deepened over the last two decades, the relationship between the two largest nations in northeast Asia has become more tense. This runs contrary to IR’s liberal argument that economic interactions should bring peace to international relations because no one wants to fight a war with a nation with which it trades. The title of Richard Bush’s most recent book suggests that he accounts for the puzzle of why the conflict between China and Japan has worsened as economic interactions between them have increased. This book actually goes beyond the expectation that its title suggests. It broadly surveys the domestic politics of each nation: military institutions, bureaucratic organizations, and government’s decision-making processes. It then attempts to explain the outcomes of China–Japan relations by making the argument that the domestic politics of each nation have significant influences on this perilous relationship. It concludes with the author’s policy recommendations while touching upon the US role in China–Japan relations.

Bush starts his discussion with the most likely factor to make China–Japan relations tense: the security dilemma, in that “the steps that one side takes to promote its own security leave the other with a growing sense of vulnerability” (p. 2). What is unique in the case of China–Japan relations is that the “history issue” is added to this typical security dilemma problem between a rising challenger (China) and a declining power (Japan), as “Imperial Japan exposed and exploited China’s weakness” more than any other country during the Second World War, “fostering a deep sense of victimization among the Chinese and leaving scars on the Chinese psyche” (p. 2). Given the security dilemma and the history issue, China–Japan relations worsened from 1998 to 2006, apparently because of Jiang Zemin’s visit to Japan in 1998, Koizumi’s repeated visits to the Yasukuni Shrine during his term as prime minister (2001–06), and Japan’s attempt to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Bush summarizes the downturn of relations during this period, when “forces [were] at play between the two countries that [were] immune to the good intentions of new leaders” (p. 22). He then raises four possible reasons to account for the downturn: leaders’ decisions, public nationalism, domestic politics, and failure to communicate effectively (p. 23). Bush uses the fourth explanation to highlight the security dilemma in China–Japan relations, saying: “Each state is unable to persuade the others of its peaceful intentions and must guard against the possibility of future aggression by another” (p. 25). He argues for the significance of the security dilemma because now “levers that they [China and Japan] were accustomed to using – Japan’s economic assistance and China’s history issue – no longer had much pull” (p. 24). As China and Japan

have lost the traditional “levers” to alleviate the tension, more “structural contradictions” persist and the two nations have to look for the ways to mitigate the contradictions (p. 39).

Bush tries to find possible answers to solve the structural tensions between China and Japan by exploring each nation’s domestic politics. In particular, he discusses the military institutions of both nations, focusing on the relationship among civilian leaders, the military, and other bureaucratic organizations, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). The overall situation of military power is that “Japan’s air and naval capabilities are significant and China’s are growing” (p. 59), and that “the PLA [People’s Liberation Army of China] has too much autonomy ... while the SDF [Self-Defense Force of Japan] has too little” (p. 305). Bush argues that it is important to pay attention to the military institutions of both nations because “those institutional factors make a clash more likely to occur than not and they are likely to exacerbate any clash that does occur” (p. 87), and because “institutional features of the People’s Liberation Army and the Japan Self-Defense Forces would exacerbate the clash rather than contain it” (p. 124). For example, “the military regards the East China Sea as its strategic buffer and opposes concessions to Japan that would restrict PLAN’s [PLA Navy] freedom of movement” (p. 143), while the MFA cannot take the initiative for interagency discussions though President Hu Jintao has moved the issue to the diplomatic channel. On the Japanese side, the combination of indecisive civilian leadership (except for Koizumi) and intense regulation of the SDF make the military’s viewpoint under-represented in decision making, and hinder policy makers from acquiring updated information about other countries’ military situations and decision-making processes (pp. 176–177).

Compared with the analysis on military institutions, Bush’s analysis of public nationalism is thin, which is unfortunate. He raises a very interesting observation at the beginning of the book: “ironically it is in nondemocratic but Internet-friendly China that a hard-edged, anti-Japanese nationalism is a vocal and influential force” (p. 4). Perhaps, public nationalism on the internet is influential *because of* authoritarianism where other channels of political participation are restricted. This question is worth examining in future research.

HIROKI TAKEUCHI

China’s Multilateral Cooperation in Asia and the Pacific: Institutionalizing Beijing’s “Good Neighbour Policy”

CHIEN-PENG CHUNG

London and New York: Routledge, 2010

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This recent book by Chien-peng Chung is a welcome contribution to the growing literature on China’s foreign policy, a highly relevant field of study. Chung examines China’s “Good Neighbour Policy” and its multilateral co-operation in Asia, encompassing Central Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific, specifically the Pacific Island Countries (PICs).

Following an “Introduction” outlining the purpose, focus and objectives of the book, chapter two is devoted to China’s “Good Neighbour Policy.” The subsequent chapters explore China’s participation in, or dealings with, the following multilateral