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Harsh V. Pant. China's Rising Global Profile: The Great Power Tradition. Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press. 2011.

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Harsh V. Pant. *China's Rising Global Profile: The Great Power Tradition*. Brighton, Portland, and Toronto: Sussex Academic Press. 2011.

This book is valuable for any reader interested in the impact of the rise of China on the Asia-Pacific, South Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Middle East, Africa, the European Union, and to a certain extent, the United States. The book is easy to read because it is written in a clear and concise manner. Harsh Pant has made it very clear, within 103 pages of text, what he thought the consequences would be of China's rising global profile.

The first chapter, "Great Power Tradition," sets the tone of the book. In it, China is making its presence increasingly felt around the world, not unlike the old British Empire once did, nor unlike the Americans and Soviets sought to do (by attempting to spread their political influence and military presence during the Cold War). The chapter explains how China asserts itself economically, militarily, and politically in the world and how China continues to show the rest of the world that it is a strong nation to be taken seriously. Pant's work is in line with researchers who believe, as I do, that China (like the Americans and Soviets did during the Cold War) seeks global hegemony.

Two issues continue to stand out in Chinese foreign policy over the last decade: First, as the country maintains phenomenal rates of economic growth, it continues to consume vast amounts of resources. Out of concern for its energy security, China has gone around the world securing trade deals and energy pacts, even when doing so means working with cruel and dictatorial regimes to secure supplies. Second, China has modernized its military and defense capabilities, and, problematically, accounts of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) are not transparent. This modernization has caused considerable anxiety among China's neighbors in the Asia-Pacific as well as in India and the United States, despite China taking great pains to convince the world that it does not pose a regional security threat. However, as Pant has pointed out, "a superpower is a superpower," and it is time, he says, for the world to wake up from any "sophomoric naivety" with respect to China's intentions because "power is necessarily expansionist" (page 10). I must add that China's claim that it is not an imperial power is a message constructed explicitly to persuade East and Southeast Asian countries that they ought not to compare China with former colonial empires in the region, most specifically the old Japanese Empire.

The rest of the book covers China's changing relationships with the Asia-Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the European Union, as well as China's competition with India for control of the Indian Ocean. China's emerging role in the Asia-Pacific and South Asia means that Japan, India, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) must re-assess their relations with China. China has focused on the Asia-Pacific and South Asia in order to contain the regional influence of other potential powers, such as India and Japan. The area from Pakistan in the west to Japan in the north and Indonesia in the south is seen by China to be its own backyard. Pant paints a grim picture of China, India, and Japan striving to achieve dominance in the Asia-Pacific and South Asia, with China leading the way due to its economic prowess and military power. Chinese domination of both regions also comes at a time when American global influence is waning. Pant has pointed out that Chinese are now so confident of their supremacy in the Asia-Pacific that they have reacted aggressively to American arms sales to Taiwan and lectured the Americans on economic management. Likewise, ASEAN and Taiwan are forced by the realities of international politics to sign Free Trade Agreements with China. Pant points out that while China has worked hard to contain India, China continues to maintain good relations with India in the hope that India will not work with the United States against Chinese interests in the area.

The situation in South Asia and the Indian Ocean is complex, as these areas are considered to be under the sphere of influence of India. Whereas there is no country that effectively challenges China in the Asia-Pacific (except perhaps Japan), in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, China must take on India directly in a struggle for dominance. Toward that end, China has enjoyed good relations with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal in order to contain Indian political, economic, and military influences in the region. Sino-Pakistani economic agreements and nuclear co-operation and Sino-Bangladeshi trade and co-operation in law enforcement are likely to contain Indian influence. Sri Lanka has openly supported China's stance on Taiwan in a bid to gain Chinese support in the Sri Lankan government's campaign against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. After deposing its king, Nepal came under the control of a Maoist government whose first act was to organize a state visit to China. Maoist governments in Nepal and China share common political doctrines and like Pant, I expect Chinese influence in Nepal to increase.

The Indian Ocean remains the safest bet for continued Indian dominance despite Chinese interests in the region. The Chinese had negotiated with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh for the use of Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi ports. The Chinese are interested in controlling bases in the Indian Ocean the way the old British Empire did. While Pant acknowledges the management and structural problems of the Indian Armed Forces and the rivalry between its various arms, he believes that it is "far-fetched" (page 56) to contemplate Chinese dominance of the Indian Ocean, as the Chinese navy has not yet made its presence felt. Both the United States and India continue to exercise diplomatic initiatives to counter any Chinese presence, and the Indians actively monitor Chinese activities in the Indian Ocean. Pant has also pointed out that despite their efforts in the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean, the Chinese are not playing a broader political role in the Middle East. China continues to monitor the volatile nature of Middle Eastern politics due to Chinese domestic demand for oil supplies from the Middle East. Pant has suggested that Western nations encourage China to act as a bridge between Western nations and regimes that are openly hostile to the West, such as Iran. My own view is that this is unlikely to transpire; China will probably support the latter against Western nations' interests.

With respect to China's foreign interests, Africa is seen as "the new El Dorado" (page 81) because of the potential for China to milk Africa's resources. This opportunity has inspired Chinese cooperation with corrupt and inhumane regimes in African countries such as Somalia and Zimbabwe. This accommodation of dictatorships in the name of serving its own political interests and the excavation of African resources to be exported to China has resulted in [African] locals opposing Chinese business and mining interests. In 2007, African political leaders in South Africa and Zambia accused the Chinese of behaving like an imperial power (despite explicit Chinese claims that they are behaving in no such manner); if China hopes to convince anyone that they are not, in fact, behaving imperially, however, it must do more to change its image on the African continent.

Finally, Pant paints a picture of ambivalence in Chinese relations with the European Union (EU). Pant has argued that it would be profitable for the EU to expand its relations with India and the United States in order to keep Chinese influence at bay. China has found it advantageous to work with individual nations rather than the EU as a bloc, and Pant warns that the rise of China along with the international decline of the United States could result in the marginalization of the EU in global affairs.

I find this book useful in understanding not only the rise of China but international relations today. The arguments by Pant are sound, and they reflect a general consensus on the (largely negative) impact of the rise of China in the world today. Some weaknesses remain, however: Despite placing China within the "Great Power Tradition," a large portion of the book looks at China's rise at the expense only of India. The study should have been expanded

to include the impact of China's rising global profile on the United States, Japan, Southeast Asia, and even Taiwan. Chinese influence and interests in Latin America and Australia are also not discussed in this book. Additionally problematic may be the fact that there are few Chinese sources used. Pant has used mostly American and Indian sources, and this may give the book a biased view against the Chinese. Finally, some parts of the book are repetitive. The Chinese interest in building a port in Hambantota is mentioned in pages 42 and 55; the development of Chittagong is mentioned in pages 40 and 55; and two different names of the former Iranian oil minister are given on page 73. In terms of the overall approach, however, this book is worth reading, as it informs the reader about the impact of China's rising global profile.

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