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On: 14 August 2011, At: 18:57

Publisher: Routledge

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## Asian Studies Review

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/casr20>

### Book reviews

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Available online: 27 Feb 2007

To cite this article: Mabel Lee, Margaret Bradstock, William Case, Mark Beeson, Etsuko Hae-jin Kang, Jane Orton, Joe B. Moore, Jixing Xu, Sandra Wilson, Don McMillen, Richard McGregor, J. Bruce Jacobs, Lincoln Li, Peter Micic, Bob Pokrant, Noel Boreham, Bronia Kornhauser, Vedi R. Hadiz, John Legge, David Mercer, Ton-That Quynh-Du, Stuart Robson & M.C. Ricklefs (1997): Book reviews, *Asian Studies Review*, 20:3, 167-209

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03147539708713136>

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REGINALD YIN-WANG KWOK and ALVIN Y. SO, editors. *The Hong Kong-Guangdong Link: Partnership in Flux*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1995. xiii, 294 pp. Tables, maps, figures, references, index. US\$79.95, hard-cover.

This volume is the seventh in the excellent series *Hong Kong Becoming China: The Transition to 1997* under the general editorship of Ming K. Chan and Gerard A. Postiglione. Reginald Kwok and Alvin So, the present volume's editors, are Hong Kong-born academics at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where they specialise in urban planning and sociology. In his Foreword to this volume, Postiglione points out that while Hong Kong has little future without Guangdong and that there is a growing economic interdependency between the two "partners", Hong Kong has continued to develop in its own way. Indeed, the central theme of this collection of extensively revised and updated papers stemming from a November 1991 conference is whether, given the "one country, two systems" formula, Hong Kong can continue to go its own way while increasing functional integration with Guangdong proceeds. The volume editors have chosen the approach of centre-periphery rather than triangles, although noting that the Hong Kong-Guangdong nexus "does not exist in a vacuum, but in a global relationship rooted in the Asia-Pacific belt of economic prosperity" (p. x).

The volume has ten chapters divided into four parts focusing on historical perspectives, cultural transformation, economic restructuring, and the partnership in flux during the past decade or so. There also is a useful introductory chapter setting out the framework for exploring the Hong Kong-Guangdong link, and a brief post-script covering developments from mid-1992 to mid-1994.

Noting that there are many perspectives in this complex and conflicting interaction, the editors suggest three major forces at work: political and cultural elements, institutional structure, and development. To study these forces, they recognise the necessity of looking at them in an interdisciplinary manner.

Ming Chan's chapter explores how the unifying, reinforcing and dividing attitudes, events and movements have shaped the linkage. His hopeful conclusion is that after the 1997 transfer of sovereignty, "without its colonial baggage, imperialistic affront, and problems of alien jurisdiction, Hong Kong can become a net gain to Guangdong and to the entire Chinese nation". But does this view, as rightfully sympathetic as it is to the underlying sense of humiliation and denial at the hands of foreign powers generally felt by Chinese compatriots, reflect an adequate sensitivity about the evolution of considerable variegation within the broader Chinese culture realm, as evidenced by the evolution of a unique Hong Kong identity and culture which, in particular, will continue to be challenged by like-minded "colonialist" (dare one say "Han chauvinist"?) rulers from the northern centre?

Graham Johnson's contribution looks at the impact of ties established through transnational migration and native place association. He makes the interesting observation that the entrepreneurial activities with Hong Kong partners are a key to economic transformation, and that where such partnership is lacking, structural change is muted. He adds that in parts of Hong Kong's hinterland where there are extensive links with overseas Chinese, in contrast to "compatriots (*tongbao*) in Hong Kong, while the impact of those connections is substantial, especially for the social infrastructure, they have not resulted in fundamental economic restructuring" (p. 65). Johnson argues that despite the reservations held by some analysts about the

fate of Hong Kong's political structures, Hong Kong's domination of its hinterland will likely remain well beyond 1997, and those who lack Hong Kong connections will probably be disadvantaged.

In his chapter on Hong Kong's socio-cultural impact on the Pearl River Delta, Gregory Guldin identifies the emergence of a *namyuet* culture, composed on the one hand of Guangdong's socialist People's Republic culture and on the other of Hong Kong's capitalist and Western-influenced culture, in the increasingly integrated urban zone. He argues that this *namyuet* culture and the economic and political clout of Hong Kong will further erode Guangzhou's pre-eminence both locally and nationally.

Ming-kwan Lee's chapter competently lays out the crises of community and identity in Hong Kong as both economic development and political challenges shape its reintegration with China. He surmises that the Hong Kong people will have to redefine who they are and how they are to relate to one another, to the outgoing colonial authority, to the incoming Chinese-managed government, to the Chinese across the border, and to neighbouring countries. He also discusses the complex issue of "nationality" which has continued to vex Hong Kong-born people, wherever they may now live, and considers this in the light of the changing notions of identity among sectors of this group. He states that while political reintegration may be inevitable, reintegration at the social level (including mutual identification of the Hong Kong and mainland Chinese) may not be, and closes by posing the crucial question of how to articulate an identity (and sense of community) that is at once welcomed by the Hong Kong Chinese and acceptable to the central government in Beijing.

In their chapter on production change in Guangdong, Xueqiang Xu, Reginald Kwok, Lixun Li, and Xiaopei Yan show

that there is a general consensus that the present trend of the province's development is on the right track, and that outward-oriented industrialisation is the accepted positive path to development. In this, Hong Kong has played an instrumental, if not leading, role and will spearhead Guangdong's integration into the Asian transnational economic scene. But, for this to happen, the market component of the province's economy must be supported through further restructuring and allowed to broaden. While not mentioned directly by the authors, the maintenance and proper management of Hong Kong's dynamic capitalist economic environment after 1997 also would be essential in assuring these positive trends. In his chapter on the industrial transformation of Hong Kong, Victor Sit argues that continued positive industrial development and integration demands the creation of new intergovernmental agencies to foster cooperation and better planning, especially in the infrastructure and investment areas.

In what is arguably the best chapter of the volume, Ian Scott contends that the main thrust of the present Chinese government's policies in the region is to ensure that Hong Kong is compliant with central directives after 1997, and that economic development along capitalist lines in southern China is subsidiary to that aim (p. 189). He examines with depth and clarity the erosion of the provisions laid out in the 1984 Sino-British Joint Agreement on Hong Kong—and, indeed, the erosion of the bases for Hong Kong's future autonomy, representative government and the preservation of civil liberties under Chinese rule. He traces these problems primarily back to London's failed policies. Given this climate of broken promises by both Beijing and Great Britain, he states that the task of the relevant government players in Hong Kong is to attempt to persuade the people of the

territory that they have a free and autonomous future in a situation in which there is little credible evidence to support such a conclusion. While economically Hong Kong and its region have prospered, politically it will go from being a British colony to being a colony of China.

The subsequent change of policy under Governor Chris Patten, with its greater willingness to stand up to China and its emphasis on more rapid and more broadly-based political reform, has not negated Scott's argument about China's ultimate agenda but it has raised some questions for consideration so far as British policy is concerned that have been evaluated in several studies since this volume was published. That notwithstanding, overall this is a solid collection of informative essays on a topic which will be of increasing importance over the next decade as Hong Kong experiences its passage to Chinese sovereignty and as China passes into a post-Deng Xiaoping era. In this context, the questions raised here should live long beyond the volume's publication date.

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~~KENZABURO OË. *A Personal Matter*. (Translated from the Japanese by John Nathan.) London: Picador, 1995. 165 pp. A\$16.95, paper. This translation first published by Grove Press, 1969. Originally published in Japanese as *Kojinteki Na Taiken*. Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1964.~~

~~This is a very moving, at times sad but also very amusing book by the winner of the 1994 Nobel Prize for Literature. The principal character is no hero, and as the story unfolds the reader wishes he would grow up and take responsibility for his actions.~~

~~It's a simple story, really. A young man, a teacher, has married a woman he doesn't love because her father is a colleague to whom the husband is very close. It is not over-weening ambition that prompts this decision—the young man, referred to throughout simply as "Bird", is not calculating—but rather a wish to remain close to the academic who becomes his father-in-law.~~

~~As the book opens, Bird is in a bookshop looking at a map of part of Africa while his wife is in hospital about to give birth to their first child. There is Bird, thinking about travelling to Africa, a project totally unrelated to his circumstances. His wife barely enters his thoughts and the idea that he is about to become a father hardly registers on his consciousness.~~

~~Bird appears to be very shallow, though he is just immature and irresponsible. Oë's skill lies in his ability to make a compelling and entertaining story out of these elements and one or two others. While his wife is in hospital Bird spends most of his time, including nights, with a former girlfriend who, for reasons we don't ever fully understand, seems devoted to him. The baby is born grossly deformed. Bird and his wife have never been close, their sexual relationship has been unsatisfying for both, and in the course of the book, which focuses on the critical days following the birth, there is virtually no communication between them.~~

~~One would think that the issue of having a grossly deformed baby (particularly in Japan) would require consultation between the parents and between parents and doctors. This does not occur. A conspiracy of silence surrounding her means that the young mother has no idea of the true condition of the baby—Bird and his in-laws allow her only to believe the baby is ill, and she is not allowed to see it. Perhaps because of the potential shame~~