

The case studies offer astute observations that seamlessly navigate across levels of analysis, bridging individual experiences and beliefs with community-level strategies and practices, national politics and legal systems, and international politics and law. Rankin persuasively articulates how examining this broader range of actors, institutions, and avenues for accountability unveils the range of possibilities available to maintain the system of international criminal law and empower greater accountability through both official and de facto means.

**Great Power Strategies—The United States, China, and Japan.** By Quansheng Zhao. New York: Routledge, 2022.

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Quansheng Zhao's declared purpose for this book is to compare the foreign strategies of the United States, China, and Japan. This is an ambitious goal as it is not easy to analyze the evolution of and motivations behind just one country's strategic formulation and conduct, let alone three.

Professor Zhao argues for a "macro-micro" approach to understanding statecraft. He suggests persuasively that analysts should consider international constraints and domestic determinants (the macro level) as well as the views and motivations of decision-makers (the micro level). Moreover, he urges attention to the interactions among these variables in influencing a country's strategy (Model C on p. 25).

The core of the book consists of Chapters 2, 3, and 4, each taking on the foreign policy of the United States, China, and Japan, respectively. These chapters, however, do not follow a common analytic framework or organization. There is not any systematic attempt to compare how these countries' strategies are decided and implemented. It is also not always clear which international constraints and domestic determinants are most important for each country's strategy, and the extent of influence exercised by their decision-makers in the formulation and conduct of this strategy. Zhao does emphasize China's very different policies under Mao Tse-tung and Deng Xiao-ping, but he does not examine individual leaders' impact in the United States, such as Washington's foreign policy under Donald Trump and Joe Biden, answering questions such as why their China policy shows significant continuity despite their other policy differences.

Some parts of the book are fascinating, such as the discussion on the "troika" of officials/scholars who have influenced the United States–Japan alliance relationship. But similar analysis is not undertaken for China and Japan, thereby leaving the reader wondering whether the same phenomenon exists in these other countries. Similarly,

although Professor Zhao spends considerable time citing the literature on China's think tanks, he is silent on whether such entities have played a similar role in the United States and Japan and if so, how much influence they have had and in what issue areas. As another example, do the informal mechanisms attributed to Japan's policy processes have parallels in China and the United States?

Much of the book offers a descriptive narrative, and there are many tables presenting relative economic growth rates, military expenditures, foreign investment, and so on. It is not clear, however, how the contents of these tables are pertinent to the strategic formulation and conduct of each country being studied. For example, what is the effect of public opinion in each country?

Zhao discusses the major transformation in China's foreign policy, changing from a confrontational stance rejecting arms control agreements and multilateral institutions like the United Nations and avowing support for the violent overthrow of bourgeois governments abroad when Mao dominated the policy scene to the reforms under Deng to open China's economy and engage actively in multilateral diplomacy. But there is no similar treatment of the sea change in U.S. policy from fostering a liberal world order to rejecting some of its principal tenets and key institutions during Trump's America First administration. The traditional U.S. consensus on liberal internationalism, supported by both Democrats and Republicans, has collapsed in recent years—presumably a major change in domestic constraint on Washington's foreign policy. What can account for this development? Indeed, what can explain Washington's policy of engagement and collaboration with Beijing in the 1970s and 1980s and its policy of containment and competition today? Just as in the case of the major policy transformation for China from Mao to Deng, it would have been helpful to learn what international constraints and domestic determinants have brought about this change. Surely, some of the factors discussed by Zhao cannot account for such change. For example, as a constant, Confucianism cannot explain changes in China's foreign policy such as those from Mao to Deng. Confucianism was explicitly rejected by the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution. The reader is therefore left puzzling over Zhao's assertion that "with confidence, one can argue that Confucianism will continue to serve as a leading source of ideas in China for its efforts to pursue modernization" (p. 103). Nor can the same legacy of Meiji Restoration account by itself for an aggressive Japan in the 1930s and 1940s and its avowed pacifism today. Non-linear relationships and the interactions among several independent variables must be considered.

The major question confronting the reader of this book concerns the author's dependent variable—the strategies being pursued by the United States, China, and Japan. What are these strategies and why have they changed? As

an example, the U.S. policy toward China has evolved from engagement to competition, even confrontation. It would have been useful to have a discussion in Chapter 2, showing how these policy changes reflect a change in U.S. strategy toward China. We need of course to stipulate this dependent variable (strategy) before we can try to explain it.

Naturally, it is also necessary to stipulate the independent variable(s). The reader often encounters seeming inconsistencies, even contradictions, on this score. For example, Zhao simultaneously states that “in the foreseeable future, no matter whether the US economy continues to deteriorate or recover, it is certain that China’s voice in international economic affairs will continue to increase” (p. 65); “In the economic field, China’s developmental momentum is strong and it holds the upper hand [vis-à-vis the U.S.]” (p. 72); and “China’s rapid economic growth, which has been the impetus for regional power shift, is still uncertain” (p. 75). How should the reader reconcile these statements, and how are China’s economic growth and its economic challenges supposed to affect its foreign strategy? When China had a weak economy during the Maoist years, its foreign policy was allegedly bellicose. But now after its economy has grown enormously, Washington claims that its policy has again become bellicose. How can both a weak and strong economy produce the same policy?

Of course, the policies pursued by a country are not the same as its strategy but are rather a reflection of this strategy intended to implement it. Thus, the United States may be said to have a strategy of preventing another country from becoming a regional hegemon after it has itself attained this status in the Western Hemisphere, inclining it to shift its support from Japan to China, and vice versa, to prevent the stronger one of them from claiming regional hegemony in East Asia. Alternatively, Washington’s policy of engaging China can be said to reflect a strategy seeking to change the character of China’s government and the values of its people. Other examples may be Deng’s injunction to his countrymen that China should bide its time and hide its brilliance, and Yoshida’s doctrine exchanging Japan’s political and military subordination to the United States for Washington’s support assisting Japan’s economic recovery and growth. As these illustrations imply, policies are supposed to be motivated and guided by a more basic calculation and conception, a country’s grand strategy.

In conclusion, this book has a laudable goal to compare the foreign strategies of different countries. It would be a stronger contribution if it could be clearer in specifying its dependent and independent variables, demonstrating the relative impact of various independent variables, and showing the similarities and dissimilarities in the policy processes producing United States, Chinese, and Japanese strategies by applying the same concepts and analysis to them.

### The Institutional Foundation of Economic

**Development.** By Shiping Tang. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2022. 328p. \$120.00 cloth, \$35.00 paper.

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Institutions matter to international development. We know that. What we struggle with knowing is how they matter and what we should do in places where they matter in a negative way, constraining a nation’s social or economic potential. Shiping Tang’s new book helps make sense of many questions we might have in this regard. It makes a straightforward argument about the conditions needed for effective development—where countries collect the many \$100 notes lying around (per a metaphor of Tang’s)—and offers a view of the underlying foundational elements required to facilitate these conditions and of how these elements fit into a broader set of governing considerations.

In the first instance, Tang suggests that four “big things” must be in place for countries to take advantage of their existing development potential: possibility, incentive, capability, and opportunity. He then claims that these things are made possible by six institutional foundations: political hierarchy, property rights, social mobility, redistribution, innovation, protection, and equal opportunity. Finally, he notes that these institutional foundations are only one pillar in a “new development triangle” of characteristics required by development states—with the other two being strong state capacity and sound socioeconomic policies.

These three fundamental ideas are important and useful for both academics and practitioners who have settled on the idea that institutions matter but are still trying to work out how. Taken together, they offer a useful way of thinking about what kinds of behaviors one should try to influence to promote development, what kinds of institutions influence these behaviors, and how the institutions fit into a broader perspective on governing. These are important and practical contributions that make this book an ideal companion to other staples, like works by Bates, North, Ostrom, and Rodrik.

Beyond the value of these big ideas, I found Tang’s work an easy-to-read yet rigorously researched discussion that draws on real-world examples from many settings. He also goes beyond many of the other prominent new institutional economics texts by offering a more interdisciplinary reflection on both the challenges of international development and the state of new institutional theory (in economics and other disciplines). He gives a useful synthesis of past work across disciplines, landing on an insightful set of new, adapted, or intellectually fused ideas for his readers to chew on—often by connecting dots that already exist in the new institutional literature, albeit in