**Listening for Tiptoes Towards The Bomb**

Asia’s Latent Nuclear Powers: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan

By Mark Fitzpatrick

Routledge, 2016, 474 pages, $18.33 (Paperback in the Adelphi Series by The Institute for Strategic Studies)

In the wake of North Korea’s recent nuclear test and satellite launch, South Korean hawks were emboldened to fly out of their cages, and newspaper editorials in Seoul screamed for a new hardline approach. Prominent was a call for the US to re-introduce tactical nuclear weapons into South Korea, or for Seoul to exit the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and start building its own arsenal. The timing could thus hardly be better for Mark Fitzpatrick’s meticulously researched and coldly argued study of “nuclear latency” in East Asia. After a long career in the US government, he spent a decade studying nuclear issues at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (the now runs its Washington office). He combines a deep knowledge of the region, grounded in East Asian contemporary history, with a technical mastery of nuclear weapons technology. He documents Seoul, Tokyo and Taipei’s Cold War efforts to achieve a nuclear “hedge,” triggered primarily by China’s nuclear test in 1964. While Japan has remained more carefully in compliance with the international non-proliferation regime, South Korea and Taiwan both secretly tiptoed down the path to the bomb. Fitzpatrick argues that the credibility of US security reassurance is the key variable in keeping these states latent nuclear powers. Despite the high costs of a nuclear breakout and grave risks of further proliferation, latency cannot be taken for granted.

Fitzgerald’s study is an excellent primer for those trying to understand what the domino effect of an East Asian “nuclear breakout” might look like, and what is required to prevent it.

Reviewed by John Delury

**Complexity, Security and Civil Society in East Asia: Foreign Policies and the Korean Peninsula**

Edited by Peter Hayes and Kiho Yi

Oipan Book, 2015, 470 pages, $18.99 (Kindle)

This book is the fruit of a six-year global collaboration around the question of the role civil society and NGOs should play in Northeast Asia’s future. In a region historically dominated by strong states, the role of the civil society is a critically important and neglected topic, despite East Asia’s incredibly dynamic societies. The Nautilus Institute’s Peter Hayes and Kiho Yi of Hanshin University collect a rich mix of collaborators to think through the potential for “civic diplomacy.” Each co-authored chapter tackles a complex problem: How to sustain the region’s remarkable growth by shifting to “green economics”? How to adapt social and political life to relentless urbanization — a trend that continues at a blistering pace in China? How to resolve the dilemma of nuclear insecurity — a global problem felt acutely by North Korea’s neighbors? The volume concludes by looking to the future, imagining various scenarios for Northeast Asia circa 2050.

A kind of call to arms to civic groups, and a reminder to governments that they are stewards.

Reviewed by John Delury

**Suspicions Lurking Under the Surface**

Anti-Americanism in Democratizing South Korea

By David Straub

The Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Stanford University, 2015, 280 pages, $18.95 (Paperback)

When, a year ago, US ambassador Mark Lippert was brutally stabbed at a public forum in downtown Seoul, the specter of anti-Americanism suddenly reared its ugly head. Was this the crazed action of a lone wolf, or the eruption of a resentment and anger felt more widely among South Koreans?

David Straub wrestles with the tangled question of Korean anti-Americanism from the perspective of a retired foreign service officer who saw it in all its fury when stationed in Seoul in 2002. That year, hundreds of thousands took to the streets after a US military court let off two US soldiers who fatally ran over two Korean schoolgirls on a country road. Straub reconstructs the perfect storm of the late 1990s that soured Korean public opinion on the country’s ally and protector. The ascent to power of progressives who had spent decades fighting US-backed authoritarian rulers, the national media’s sensationalist reporting culture, and a series of controversies around US Forces Korea generated profound suspicion that exploded in response to the girls’ deaths. The divergence between Seoul’s Sunshine Policy to engage North Korea and George W. Bush’s hardline approach added policy tension to the toxic public sentiment.

Straub notes that this dark period in relations has been happily forgotten with polls reflecting “pro-American” attitudes once again. But he ends on a sobering note, warning that an alliance of peoples is much harder to sustain than an alliance of militaries, and a special burden falls on US diplomacy to deal with China’s rise, Japan’s assertiveness, and the North Korean threat in a way that keeps South Korea’s trust.

Reviewed by John Delury
When pundits talk of the return of geopolitics in this century, the term usually carries negative, or even pejorative, connotations. Phil Kelly, professor at Emory University, attempts in this book to save geopolitics—“classical geopolitics,” to be precise—which has been tarnished by not only the ideology of Nazism, but also that of the Cold War, and often mistakenly fused with realist power politics. Tracing classical geopolitics’ roots in the 19th century, the author tries to resuscitate the tradition in its pure form by going back to the bare bones of geopolitics: first, establishing a standard classical definition, then constructing a “model” with 60-odd geopolitical “theories,” and finally applying those theories to eight international relations events and policies all the way from the Peloponnesian War to the start of an inquiry into continuities between past and present. Likewise, only with critical and analytical thinking about alternatives, offer an escape from the imprisonment of the past.

Reviewed by Taehwan Kim, Associate Professor at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy and a book review co-editor for *Global Asia*.

**Geopolitics Goes Back to the Future**

**History Lessons: a Health Warning**

That history always teaches us is a truism, and policymakers particularly learn from the past to spot similar times in the present and plan for them. This volume is another collective endeavor to explore this well-recognized history-policy nexus. Its new take is to treat the nexus as an authentic dialogue between the “two tribes” of historians and policymakers. A diverse group of scholars and policy practitioners are rounded up to explore just how history teaches policymakers. The authors highlight in particular the utility of historical analogies, symbols and metaphors, historical narratives, as well as the understanding that policymakers themselves have of history. Yet multiple chapters show how historical analogies can influence policy in pernicious, as well as beneficial, ways: the Munich analogy had some positive effects on US policy leading to the first Gulf War, but its use in US policy over the Vietnam War and in British policy during the 1956 Suez Crisis shows how badly the uncritical application of historical analogies can distort policy. The authors in unison warn against the politicization of historical analogies, and stress that they should serve only as the start of an inquiry into continuities between past and present. Likewise, only with critical and analytical minds, they argue, can historical sensibility and historical thinking about alternatives, offer an escape from the imprisonment of the past.

Reviewed by Taehwan Kim.

**The Power of the Past: History and Statecraft**

Edited by Hal Brands and Jeremi Suri

Brookings Institution, 2016, 305 pages, $32.00 (Paperback)

The authors in unison warn against the politicization of historical analogies.

**Nations Needed to Do the Right Thing**

Since economist Jim O’Neill coined the term BRIC for Brazil, Russia, India and China, copycat acronyms have multiplied to denote emerging economic powerhouses. In this book, Brookings scholar Ted Piccone twists the concept to look at five emerging democracies — India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey and Indonesia — from a different perspective, that of human rights and democracy. Piccone believes their potential contributions as prosperous democracies committed to protecting freedoms and human development will likely determine the fate of the international liberal order. Shifting power balances, he says, are rocking the post-World War II international liberal order and revealing new fault lines at the intersection of human rights and international security. In between the two contending camps, one favoring sovereignty over international humanitarin intervention, the other bound to the idea of democratic order, these five democracies have a crucial role as swing states. Following this logic, Piccone finds that his five have been inconsistent advocates at best for democracy and human rights on the international stage, being caught in the long-standing tug-of-war between noninterference in domestic affairs and humanitarian intervention. He suggests that as a path to convergence, these countries should make it a priority to focus on a core set of areas that include strengthening civil society, expanding the right to information and Internet freedom, confronting corruption, ensuring business and human rights, and providing equal access to quality education.

Reviewed by Taehwan Kim.

**Five Rising Democracies and the Fate of the International Liberal Order**

By Ted Piccone

Brookings Institution, 2016, 250 pages, $32.00 (Hardcover)

**Interference, but to What Purpose?**

It is 25 years since the Berlin Wall fell, and academic investigations into post-communist transitions have flourished. Many focus on marketization and the impact exerted by democratic external influences. Much less studied is the impact of autocratic external influences. Eight researchers from different countries and academic backgrounds here explore this relatively untroubled field of research. They start from an analytical framework built on actors and political regimes at the subnational, national and supranational levels. To assess autocratic external impacts, they examine the roles of Russia, Russian NGOs, and the Eurasian Economic Union, on post-Soviet autocratic regimes at both the national and subnational levels that include the “pockets of autocracy.” Yet their findings are tentative, and it is still hard to see whether or why the autocratic external influences are promotional or diffusional. Russia’s interest in Ukraine, for example, seems due more to its geopolitical interests than a promotion of autocracy. China supports some Eurasian autocratic regimes in exchange for its own economic gains, while setting an example of economically successful authoritarianism.

This book leaves more questions open than answered. Nevertheless, there are insights.

Reviewed by Taehwan Kim.
Growing Indo-US military co-operation is in the news, as is concern in New Delhi and Washington about China's rising military might. Bruce Riedel's slim volume is a valuable primer to understanding how it all began in the dark days of late 1962. With the world on a nuclear knife-edge with the Cuban missile crisis, Mao's China was preparing to invade India. Preoccupied with Cuba, the young President John F. Kennedy left his friend, US ambassador in India John Kenneth Galbraith, to devise a proper response to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's cry for help.

Recently declassified cables are a treasure trove for Riedel, himself a CIA veteran dealing with the subcontinent. His deep knowledge and story-telling powers make for a riveting read. This is the first full-length analysis of the US role in the India-China crisis — flying in thousands of soldiers and tons of arms to stop the Chinese juggernaut. Riedel also gives a fascinating account of the CIA's secret operation in Tibet in the late 1950s. The operation run out of Dhaka (then in East Pakistan) to infiltrate anti-communist Tibetan insurgents trained in the US remained long hidden. It didn't affect China's military grip on Tibet, but it was a factor in Mao's decision to teach India a lesson. Mao was convinced that India—flying in thousands of soldiers and tons of arms—was a factor in Mao's decision to invade India.

JF's Forgotten Crisis: Tibet, the CIA and Sino-Indian War
By Bruce Riedel
Brookings Institution Press, 2015, 177 pages, $21.85 (Hardcover)

Ravi Velloor's yarn-inducing, generic title does a disservice to an original work. Subtitled "My Diary of an Indian Decade," it has the reader as a fly on the wall in India's corridors of power and halls of business. Velloor, a Kerala native educated in Delhi, has the requisite entry into the political elite to tell the inside story of a decade's growth and turmoil under Manmohan Singh's government. A longtime "foreign correspondent" in his own land, Velloor, now associate editor of The Straits Times in Singapore, is blessed with an insider's insight coupled with an outsider's perspective. That, plus his easy story-telling skills, makes this a page-turner. He picks up the era's dominant themes — from Slumdog Millionaire to exploding corruption scandals to the rise of Narendra Modi — and takes us behind the scenes. A light touch befits his perceptive insights. We meet many players, receive many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers.

India Rising: Fresh Hope, New Fears
By Ravi Velloor
Strait Times Press, 2016, 384 pages, $32.62 (Softcover)

In the 1970s and 1980s, North Korea systematically pursued a policy of covertly abducting Japanese civilians from Japan in order to bolster its espionage campaign against neighboring countries. The abductees were typically young, sometimes children or new couples, most commonly seized from seaside communities in North Korea's remote north-west. New York-based journalist Robert Boynton has written a detailed and wide-ranging account, based on interviews with Japanese politicians, activists, academics and a handful of the surviving abductees and family members who returned to Japan in 2002 and 2004. The account is vivid and often harrowing, documenting the abductees' lives in North Korea, kept in relative isolation in special detention villages (or "invitation zones") outside Pyongyang, and the challenges of later readjustment to life back in Japan. The book is also much more broadly a close exploration of the complicated historical relationship between Japan and the Korean Peninsula, exploring the legacy of the colonial period, complex issues of race and national identity, as well as the history of discrimination against ethnic Koreans in post-1945 Japan. We learn about Cold War projects to repatriate ethnic Koreans to the North in the late 1950s — tragic initiatives that frequently ended in disillusion, trauma and sometimes death — as well as the more recent complicated issue of abduction politics within Japan and Pyongyang's fraught bilateral diplomacy both with Tokyo and with Seoul.

Tracing Pyongyang’s Macabre Spy Game
By Robert S. Boynton

The Invitation-only Zone: The True Story of North Korea’s Abduction Project
By Robert S. Boynton

Juche — “autonomy,” “subjectivity” or “self-reliance” — is North Korea’s unique, defining ideology. Based on economic autarky and political independence, it is commonly seen as embodying the views of founding leader Kim Il Sung. Including chapters by one US and five leading South Korean scholars, the volume challenges this one dimensional perspective, offering instead a “historical institutional” argument that Juche emerged from a historically contingent set of interactions between North Korea and its neighbors. Starting with the 1930s, it depicts the tensions between North Korea’s anti-Japanese guerilla fighters and their nominal Chinese Communist allies, a result of mutual distrust and the fear of Japanese subversive infiltration of the ethnic Korean communities in colonial Manchuria. It explores post-independence rivalry between Pyongyang and Moscow and the emergence of North Korea’s Suryong (supreme leader) focused system of power. The volume also analyses agricultural failures both of communist-style collectivization and the environmental catastrophes of the 1990s, but also pointing to the limitations of modern industrialization of agriculture.

An Ideology Bigger Than One Man

The book also picks up the era's dominant themes — from Slumdog Millionaire to exploding corruption scandals to the rise of Narendra Modi — and takes us behind the scenes. A light touch belies his perceptive insights. We meet many players, receive many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers. Why did renowned economist and reformist Singh let corruption flourish on his watch, many answers.