

China: An International Journal

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In a field as rapidly expanding as China studies, journals are vital. Whatever their scope, with shorter lead times than books, the material these journals present is inherently more current. They can provide both the latest detailed information from field reports as well as a great range of primary sources on topics just emerging into importance. The process of peer review, moreover, engenders not only a high level of scholarship but also strong links and bonds among China scholars around the world.

Journals can also serve as trademarks of the institutions that publish them, exemplifying their particular approach or perspective. There has long been a debate over whether research pertaining to one country, especially a non-Western one, ought to use the standard paradigms of particular disciplines (such as political science, economics, law, etc.) or if, as in the case of China, a traditional area studies approach (i.e., Sinology) is still the most sound. The question is thus: Can the often highly theoretical training and methodologies taught over the past decade to post-graduates in the social sciences be applied to research on China?

We believe quality China research today is comprised of both multi-

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disciplinary area studies work and single-discipline analysis; it is not a question of either/or. While primary sources remain the key ingredient, research methodologies are increasingly important.

In this context, China journals can link China studies, which usually focus on China per se, with many discipline-based studies. We also believe that while the standard paradigms are useful in China studies, research on China can in turn contribute to the further development of general theory. Given the fact that China is experiencing a tremendous socioeconomic transformation, no social science paradigm can afford to ignore China.

It is for these reasons that we feel there is still considerable room for new China journals. We chose the name *China: An International Journal (CIJ)* because it captures the essence of our goal, namely to highlight the fact that events in China are viewed quite differently from country to country. Based outside not only China but America and Europe as well, we will strive to present diverse frames of reference and perceptions. We aim at attracting a wide and varied readership—academe, government, business, and the press.

The subject matter of *CIJ* includes all of the social sciences. Many China scholars today are highly specialized, both teaching and undertaking research within fairly narrow subject parameters. It is hoped that by providing discussion of a wide variety of topics in each issue, the *CIJ* will come to be seen as a convenient tool for such scholars to keep abreast of developments in a wide range of other fields, providing necessary background to their own endeavors.

Each issue of *CIJ* has three sections. In addition to lengthy (about 10,000 words) cutting-edge research articles and case studies on contemporary China (including Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan), the *CIJ* will also publish a section of comments and notes (no more than 5,000 words); our purpose here is not only to provide information, but also to raise questions and spark debate that may pertain to policy formulation and implementation. China is growing fast, and any domestic development will have external impacts. We hope that *CIJ* can provide a forum for China scholars to air and refine their views on current events in the country.

A third and distinctive section of *CIJ* offers summaries of official

documents pertaining to relations between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The recent signing of an agreement on economic cooperation between China and the 10-member ASEAN, potentially involving 1.7 billion consumers and two-way annual trade of US\$1.2 trillion, is a particularly significant development. It is the goal of *CIJ* to monitor the development of political, economic, social, and legal relations among these countries.

We predict that research in China studies will become increasingly specialized as larger quantities of ever more detailed data are published in China. It will become all the more important for editors to be continually monitoring what work is being done at which China studies centers around the world, and be able to call upon scholars of recognized standing in their respective fields to serve as referees.

The Internet is transforming China studies, just as it is changing practically every other field. Dozens of Chinese daily newspapers are available on the web, as are central and local government reports. Detailed information (including statistics), not long ago considered virtually impossible to obtain even when traveling to China, is now accessible from one's own office.

Electronic journals are particularly useful in China studies. The availability of back issues online makes it possible to search a particular topic in depth and trace the often breathtaking changes that have occurred. The searchability and cross-referencing afforded by e-journals are other major advantages as is the fact they can be accessed anytime, anywhere. It is becoming less necessary to go to specialized China/Asian studies libraries to research a given subject.

Every journal depends on the quality of submissions and dynamism of its contributors and readership. The response we have received since the launch of *CIJ* in early 2002 has been extremely encouraging. As the forces of globalization gain momentum, we are keen to foster dynamic discussion of new information on China, and to shed new light on old topics. As the co-editors of *CIJ*, we highly welcome articles, comments, notes, and suggestions.

BOOK REVIEW ROUNDTABLE

The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy In the Era of Reform, 1978-2000

Edited by David M. Lampton

Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2001.

508 pages; ISBN: 0-8047-4055-0 (Cloth), 0-8047-4056-9 (Paper).

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