François Godement, *Que veut la Chine ? De Mao au capitalisme* (What does China want? From Mao to capitalism)

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"incomparable continental and human masses" and whose "trilateral relations are poised to play a role in structuring tomorrow's world" (p. 9). Europe rejects this rebalancing, which will determine the future of developed countries and fundamentally reduce their relative political influence and economic might.

In terms of changes in human resources (Part 1), Chindiafrica will account for half the world's population in 2030. And in 2050 it will also have half the world's human capital. In economic terms (Part 2), the grouping's total GDP (in purchasing power parity) will rise from a fourth to almost half of the world's in 2030 (China: 25%, India: 10%, and Africa: 11%) and 60% in 2050, the authors say, although they are careful enough not to come up with precise estimates. Of course, in 2030, the West will retain technological supremacy in terms of innovation (Part 3), but "Chindia" and then Africa will be able to adopt "low cost and frugal processes and business models" that are innovative and better suited to their needs. The authors cite the success of Huawei or the Indian "little cool" refrigerator in Africa as promising illustrations.

All these changes could lead to industrialisation and agricultural modernisation in Africa and as a result reduce pressure on natural and agricultural resources (Part 4). Here, Boillot and Dembinski sound more cautious but on the whole optimistic: oil-rich African countries could overcome the "curse of black gold," or the so-called "Dutch Disease," China and India have the capacity to become less voracious for hydrocarbons and other raw materials, and Chindiafrica has the potential to become self-sufficient in food. The authors also sound upbeat when it comes to the political consequences of the shakeup (Part 5), while noting the weaknesses and contestations of the "Chinese Model," India's soft state, the insurmountable fractures of the African continent, and the US capacity for rebound, as well as the attractiveness of the European Union's institutional norms.

What conclusion does this prospective analysis indicate? Many questions and propositions, but no real conclusion. Actually, that is what the authors have done. How will the main actors in this new grouping and other countries or groups of states, such as Europe, react and adapt to these changes? No one knows. What Boillot and Dembinski seek to promote is a "moderated globalisation" rightly inspired by the economist Dany Rodrik.⁽²⁾ It is difficult to disagree with this, seeing how China and India have sought to protect themselves selectively against what they see as the destabilising currents of "hyper-globalisation," strongly suggesting that African countries strengthen their states and do likewise, including vis-à-vis China and India. That is precisely what Nigerian central bank governor Lamido Sanusi proposed recently in a well-publicised op-ed highly critical of China.⁽³⁾

The main weakness of this work, it should be clear, lies not in observing the unprecedented emergence of South-South economic, political, and human linkages, especially among the three entities chosen, but rather in the nature, coherence, and density of the trilateral relationship that forms the basis of the authors' approach. It is questionable whether China, India, and Africa constitute a relevant grouping. The expanding relations and complementarities among these economies are known, but what is their future weight relative to US/EU relations, China/developed countries, and even Brazil/Africa or the famous BRICS? What this book lacks is a comparative and prospective analysis of the economic flows and diplomatic-strategic relations among China, India, and Africa as well as among the current and future main partners of these three entities. Thus, Sino-Indian economic and political relations would most probably remain a complex mix of relatively limited cooperation and lasting strategic competition. China's weight in Africa is heavy, India's lighter, but tomorrow the two powers will have to continue to face other major actors, such as the aforementioned Brazil, the United

States, EU, Japan... and South Africa. Moreover, the persistent tensions among Chindiafrica – and within Africa – are not really addressed in the book's prospective construction. For instance, while the new Chinese diaspora in Africa (one to five million people) represents a small share of the emigration from the People's Republic, it greatly influences local economies (or at least some of them) and constitutes a source of real inter-community tension.

All in all, it is clear that the weight of Chindiafrica or of the South in general will keep growing, but neither constitutes a coherent grouping. Even less than the BRICS, in fact. One is a statistical aggregate with no real projects or common objectives, the other a convenient concept that includes not only political regimes and cultures that are bound to remain very different but also economies that, given the intrinsically unequal nature of development, have increasingly less in common. Rebalancing, yes, but Chindiafrica will not by itself make up tomorrow's world. China, India, and Africa will contribute to it no doubt by cooperating and also by squabbling occasionally.

■ Translated by N. Jayaram.

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2. *The Paradox of Globalization: Democracy and the Future of the World Economy*, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 2011.
3. "Africa must get real about its romance with China," *Financial Times*, 12 March 2013, pp. 1 and 9.

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Far from being yet another panoramic account of China's economic and diplomatic breakthroughs, this latest work by François Godement takes readers (whether well-versed in contemporary China or not) through the arcana of Communist Party politics a few months after one of the worst political scandals in the history of the People's Republic and at a time when it is witnessing a top-level changing of guard that will guide it through the decade to come.

Chapter 1 briefly reviews the case of Bo Xilai, the former Party Secretary for Chongqing Municipality (pp. 17-34). Bo sought to turn the autonomous city into a political, economic, and social laboratory for China by promoting the Great Helmsman's thoughts (especially by encouraging "Red Songs" in the city's public spaces). He wanted to use his successful crackdown on crime as a launch-pad to the highest rungs of power. His downfall constituted the first real shakeup at the top since the 1989 Tiananmen events.

A good deal of the country's political life that the top leaders had tried to keep from their compatriots' gaze was revealed through this affair; Bo Xilai indirectly exposed the actual and potential leaders to the wrath of a population exasperated with the impunity enjoyed by the high and mighty, whose interests were too closely linked to those of economic actors (Chapter 2).

The real or imagined wealth amassed by leaders while in office began to exercise the minds of millions of disadvantaged Chinese, and the elites faced the immense challenge of reducing inequalities while safeguarding their privileges and prerogatives (Chapter 3). The question has arisen whether the one-party model can survive the social changes sweeping the country (Chapter 4).

At Hu Jintao's behest, the Party-state has reasserted control over the judiciary: now the Supreme People's Court oversees and confirms the death penalty (Chapter 4). The Court has suspended several sentences, commuting the death penalty to life in prison (while reserving the right to overturn its verdict at any point in time). The role of the police and the army has been strengthened in the repression apparatus, as evident in numerous preventive campaigns and crackdowns on information circulating via the Internet. The judiciary functions but the concept of justice has made no progress: the legislative arsenal has grown over the past ten years, but as Godement points out, China is still saddled with "rule by law rather than rule of law" (Chapter 6).

Debate is raging as never before between the conservatives, who favour *status quo* with regard to reforms ushered in since the 1980s, and the reformers, who deem it necessary to introduce new reforms, both economic and political. While it is conservatives of a reformist bent who prevailed in the elevation of Xi Jinping (son of Xi Zhongxun, a revolutionary hero who was expelled and then victimised during the Cultural Revolution) to Party chief, the new leadership has already recognised that the country has to balance the fruits of growth in order to achieve a better redistribution. This would also entail a fight against the plague of corruption: expulsion of farmers from their land (by corrupt developers), the growing wealth chasm between rural and urban residents, and property becoming inaccessible to the middle class. All this adds greatly to Chinese society's current uneasiness.

China is thus at a crossroads, with the paternalistic and authoritarian regime gradually losing steam, and with its socialist ideology proving insufficient to satisfy people's aspirations for a good life (pp. 57-70). The authorities are obliged to flex their might, which has consequences for the population as a whole: popular indignation is growing by the day, "mass incidents" (*qunti kangbao shijian* 群体抗暴事件) – an official term meaning protests – are increasing in number and becoming more violent (Chapter 7).

From a geopolitical and strategic perspective, signs of change were noticeable from 2009 in Chinese diplomacy (Chapter 8). There is a persisting feeling of unease fuelled by the premise of a likely American decline on the one hand and Chinese leaders' attitudes on the other: in the Chinese authorities' assessment, the 2008 financial crisis definitively weakened the Western powers, including the United States. China is therefore taking advantage of this opportunity to promote its model of emergence (the Beijing consensus). Paradoxically, however, the most demanding policies adopted since then have only led to the return of the US to the regional landscape (*US pivot in Asia*), tending to strengthen existing alliances between the United States and its traditional allies (South Korea and Japan), or to create new ones with former "ideological enemies" (as has become evident in recent months with Vietnam) or even former "rogue states." In this context, the Burma example is instructive: Chinese muscle-flexing in military and economic matters in Burma's environs led the United States to extend a

hand to the former military regime as it embarked on unconditional transformation (and which facilitated an unprecedented democratic opening).

While it may be that real progress has been made since the start of economic reforms, it is nevertheless the case that the basic principles of new Chinese policies (territorial integrity, national sovereignty, and defence of national interests) resolutely form part of a more coercive line in the last few years, the contours of which remain imprecise to say the least (Chapter 11). In order not to upset the international balance of power, Beijing needs to moderate its discourse and appear more transparent about its real intentions. This will most certainly require adoption of a set of socio-economic reforms (at the international level but primarily at the domestic level), without which the "backlash" on the international front would have grave consequences (Chapter 10).

The book also broadens the debate and corroborates the viewpoint of another historian and strategic expert, Edward N. Luttwak:⁽¹⁾ "great state autism," the persistence of history, and people's general resentment over uncertainties about the future are elements that could eventually further threaten the fragile socio-economic equilibrium. How is it possible to comprehend on the one hand China's hardening on the international front (alongside its success over the past 30 years) highlighted by the proliferation of tensions and territorial demands along its borders (South China Sea, the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands...), and on the other hand its trend toward economic opening? In the final analysis, the issue linking the two works would be whether China can overcome its contradictions and craft its own strategy within a reasonable timeframe.

Godement's book comes across as an excellent account of twenty-first century China's strengths and weaknesses – it is a country no one can ignore – and a synthesis of the latest political and economic trends is clearly set out in a way that addresses the general reader as well as academics and other experts on contemporary China.

The author stresses that China no longer enjoys as much elbow room in its bid for modernisation and international recognition as is assumed. While there is hardly any doubt that China will emerge as the world's leading economy by 2020, there is need to observe what new development imperatives will be favoured by the new leadership (p. 69-70), as there is little doubt that the international context will demand a modicum of transparency (economic and diplomatic) on the part of Chinese leaders. Rapidly rising social inequalities, the expanding scale of discontent (mostly among the younger generation), and growing difficulties with various economic partners on the international front compel China to overcome this challenging new stage (perhaps decisively):

That is to say, there are no easy answers to the question of whether China will adopt a global international vision based on universal norms and cooperation, or adopt one based on multipolar competition in a world that would have moved beyond post-1945 Western institutions (p. 231).

■ Translated by N. Jayaram.

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1. Edward N. Luttwak, *The Rise of China vs. the Logic of Strategy*, Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 2012, 320 pp.