

Book Review

Nicola Casarini (2009)

Remaking Global Order: The Evolution of Europe-China Relations and its Implications for East Asia and the United States

Oxford: Oxford University Press

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The monograph under review analyses the rise and fall of Europe-China relations and the effect of those relations on the major powers in East Asia, the United States (US) and the global order. Beginning with examples of the relations between the European Union and China dependent upon Washington and Moscow in the 1970s and 1980s, the monograph brings the reader through to the EU enlargement period of 2004. During this period, China became the EU's second biggest trading partner after the US, whilst the EU became China's biggest trading partner. In addition to economic relations, a strategic political partnership between the EU and China was established in autumn 2003. These developments allow Nicola Casarini to consider the emergence of the EU as a global actor and the rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as two of the most important events in world politics in the last decade.

The author gives a detailed overview of the evolution of the EU-China relationship and the strategic reasons for that relationship, concentrating on the economic, technological, high-politics, strategic and security-related aspects (space and satellite navigation cooperation; advanced technology transfers; arms sales, including the proposal to lift the EU arms embargo imposed on China in 1989) that the author names "techno-political linkage". The author's primary concern seems to be the examination of the driving forces behind the development of EU-China relations and their implications for the major powers in East Asia and the US. The author asks what the significance of the EU-China partnership is for the Asian States (both for China's partners, and the US Asian Allies), the individual EU member states, and the international system as a whole - for example, has the promotion of EU space and defence interests in China made the EU a novel strategic factor in East Asia? Does the techno-political linkage have a potential disturbing effect on East Asia's strategic balance and the US security interests in the area? What about China's position in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), including the EU's opposition to grant it Market Economy Status, as well as the EU's criticisms against China for human rights violations?

As for research methods, the research is based on primary sources, including official documents and secondary literature, as well as the collection of empirical data and information not openly available through fieldwork, and about 100 interviews (carried out in Europe, China, Japan, South Korea, and the US in the period 2004-2009). The author

explains that he has also used the method of process tracing, which is a procedure designed to identify processes linking a set of initial conditions to a particular outcome.

Casarini has divided the book into three parts, which are headed "Evolution", "Balancing", and "Implications". Each part consists of three chapters, which begin with the analysis of the European position and thereafter discuss the Chinese perspective. Casarini invites to read the book in three ways: (a) as a work that analyses the development of contemporary EU-China economic, technological and political relations; (b) as an examination of the implications of the high-tech and security-related elements of the relationship for East Asia's major powers and the US; and (c) as a study tracing the process of the emergence of the EU as a novel strategic factor in East Asia.

In the first part of the monograph, "Evolution", the author examines the evolution of the EU-China relationship, the strategic reasons for the development of EU-China relations, and the relation between business and politics, bringing the reader from the Cold War constraints to today's possibilities.

Chapter I under the first part of the monograph sets the context by giving an overview of the first twenty years of Europe-China relations since the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the European Community and the PRC in 1975, until the adoption by the EU of its first document on China and the ushering in a policy of constructive engagement with Beijing in 1995. The author *inter alia* discusses bilateral relations between China and other Asian states on the one side and individual EU member states on the other side. The latter relations influenced the European Commission to release in 1994 the Communication "Towards a New Asia Strategy", in the framework of which Strategy, in 1995, the European Commission released the Communication "A Long-Term Policy for China-Europe Relations," foreseeing China's economic, social, political, cultural, environmental and security integration into the international community, and declared the relations with China to be a cornerstone in Europe's external relations, both with Asia and globally.

Chapter II examines the EU's approach to integrate China, the European Commission's second document on China "Building a Comprehensive Partnership with China", and the changing notions of (economic) security that emerged both in Europe and China, the European Commission's policy papers on China pointing out that Europe's economic security was directly affected by the developments in China, in particular by Beijing's steady, sustained, and environmentally sustainable economic growth, recognising such growth as having been in the mutual interests of both China and the EU. The Chapter also discusses Europe's strategic importance for China.

Chapter III concentrates on the interplay between business and politics in EU-China relations, resulting in the *quid pro quo* between European business interests (backed by their respective governments) and Chinese political leaders. At the beginning of the Chapter, the author examines the Chinese internal economic position, as well as its economic position on the world's stage – namely its position in the WTO that has given China better access to European markets, the rapid growth of technology-intensive Chinese export that represents a major economic challenge for the EU. Although the EU Member States pursue economic ties with China, since the 1985 Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), the Member States entrusted the conduct of economic negotiations with China to the European Commission. Also, the central actor in EU-China economic relations is the EU who is against granting China Market Economy Status (MES) that Casarini considers a political decision, caused by the wish to adopt anti-dumping measures in the framework of the WTO. Chapter III also discusses the EU-China dialogue on human rights, which has, since 1998, formally been held twice a year. Under this dialogue, the EU has considered useful to raise criticisms against China for human rights

violations, thereby undermining China's political prestige in the international arena. At the same time, the author demonstrates that the EU member states (France, for instance) have sometimes considered useful to exercise a different policy from the EU policy toward China.

In the second part of the monograph, "Balancing", the author concentrates on the establishment of the EU-China strategic partnership in Autumn 2003, explaining the techno-political aspects of that partnership, space cooperation, and the Chinese arms embargo affair, concomitantly trying to cast light on the reasons of these initiatives, which Casarini understands as "two sides of the same coin". Casarini views the establishment of the partnership initially as an extension at the level of international politics of the EU's determination to assume a greater and more autonomous foreign and security policy role.

Chapter IV of the monograph focuses on the techno-political aspect of the EU-China strategic partnership, *i.e.* the space and satellite navigation cooperation and the attempt to exploit commercial and defence-related opportunities by proposing to lift the EU arms embargo on China. In the framework of the space and satellite navigation cooperation, Casarini discusses the joint development of Galileo – the EU-led global navigation satellite system, which is an alternative to the American GPS. Here, the author understands the EU-China strategic partnership as a clear attempt by the EU and its member states, together with Chinese leaders, to challenge US primacy in key high-tech and defence-related industrial sectors, which could fit under the questions about new balancing order and the rise of Great Powers that could challenge American primacy having been raised by international relations scholars. The author examines the US countermeasure of including as many EU members and companies as possible in the Joint Strike Fighter Project with the aim to prevent the creation of an EU defence-industrial complex able to challenge the American dominant position in the defence sector. Casarini discusses the proposal to lift the EU arms embargo in China as an attempt to soft balance against US primacy in the defence sector, but also talks about hard balancing concerning the idea of promoting autonomy from the US in defence and security matters. Finally, the chapter discusses China's own high-tech programmes, and the development of EU-China knowledge-based scientific and technological cooperation.

Chapter V examines in detail the aims of EU-China space and satellite navigation cooperation, the nature of such cooperation (civilian or military), and the strategic implications of such cooperation (China being the most important non-EU partner in Galileo) for US space primacy, focusing on the questions: "Why did the EU invite China to cooperate in the joint development of Galileo?", "What would EU and Chinese policy-makers like to achieve with this kind of cooperation?", "What would be the strategic implications for the United States and its Asian allies?". Chapter VI examines the debates surrounding the proposal to lift the Chinese arms embargo in the East Asian States (specifically Japan and Taiwan) and the US (which saw the lifting as a problem for the US as potentially modifying the military balance in an area where the US has very strong security interests), the norms regulating arms sales to China, and the changing perceptions of the EU among East Asian policy-makers. The author explains that the EU member states decided to postpone the lifting of the embargo at the Brussels European Council in June 2005, notably on the basis of China's failure to improve its human rights record, but also with the strong opposition from the US and its Asian allies.

In the third part of the monograph, "Implications", the author focuses on the implications of the cooperation under the Galileo satellite system for East Asia's major powers and the US, discusses the EU and East Asia's strategic balance, the decision of the European Space Agency and the European Commission to exclude China from the second phase of Galileo.

It also questions the possibility of a global concert of democracies and estimates the status of the EU as a global actor.

Chapter VII under the third part of the monograph examines Europe's traditional involvement in East Asian security affairs, including the Asian states and their links to China, and the tensions between China and Taiwan, to demonstrate the balance of power in Asia. The Chapter links the relations with the novel EU space and defence interests in China and estimates the potential implications of the novel developments for the East Asian region.

Chapter VIII observes the influence of the EU's novel foreign and security policy in China and East Asia on the position of the US and its Asian allies following the stay of the proposal to lift the Chinese arms embargo in summer 2005, while the related novelties resulted in the Guidelines on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia. The author has also indicated the 2005 US Department of Defence Report on the Military Power of the People's Republic of China and the concern of American and Japanese policy-makers over China's growing military spending and power projection in East Asia.

Chapter IX examines the process leading to the political readjustment in July 2008 of EU-China satellite navigation cooperation with the decision to exclude China from the second phase of Galileo. This development together with the shelving of the proposal to lift the arms ban means a re-evaluation of the priorities in EU-China relations. In this Chapter, the author describes the survey conducted in eighteen countries among ca. 1000 participants, who were asked whether China represents a threat or an opportunity. The large majority of those questioned in the US (59 per cent) considered China to be a threat. However, the survey seems unreasonable, as long as there is no data available about how the questioning of random people, including people not specifically educated in highly strategic issues, could determine highly techno-political issues. Setting the attempts to weaken China aside, the solution offered by Casarini at the end of the book is to recognise the world as complex interdependence, where it cannot be escaped that it is necessary to cooperate with China.

The monograph contributes to the discussions on the emerging global order and the EU's and China's respective status in it. It is particularly significant when considering that relatively little has been written about EU-China relations to date.
