Book Reviews

ROBIN JEFFREY
India’s Newspaper Revolution:
Capitalism, Politics and the Indian-Language
Press, 1977–1999
New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000
256 pages, $65 (cloth)

Robin Jeffrey’s in-depth analysis of India’s newspaper revolution provides a thorough picture of the print media’s role in the changing Indian milieu. In *India’s Newspaper Revolution*, Jeffrey seeks to describe and account for the vast changes in India’s newspaper industry vis-à-vis the changes occurring in the Indian socio-economic-political Diaspora.

The subject—larger than the newspaper business itself—revolves around four critical points: (a) the relationship between capitalism and printing, particularly the printing of newspapers; (b) the place of newspapers in creating a public sphere, a field in which people previously excluded from decision making—from politics—find opportunity to influence affairs that once were decided for them; (c) the role that print plays in the making of nationalism; and (d) the result of print and television arriving simultaneously in a culture.

A revolution in Indian-language newspapers began in the late 1970s. Jeffrey attempts to portray the level of the print media’s expansion and the awareness created by it by citing an example of a disgusted police officer who feels that newspapers have made the police’s job more difficult by increasing common citizens’ sensitivity to their rights. Jeffrey correctly assumes that widely circulated newspapers change the way people behave, especially in the political realm. The penetration of newspapers at the subaltern level has had a revolutionary effect on Indian perception. The growth of Indian vernacular-language papers and a declining trend of elite English newspapers are revealing. Jeffrey’s study highlights how readers brought about the print boom and the expansion in the range of vernacular-language newspapers as well as big money contributions from advertisers. India’s new culture in newspaper’s post-independence scenario has come to depend on advertisement for its profits. This is certainly a transformation of the newspaper from a self-sustaining and patriotic pre-independence venture to an outright commercial enterprise with a pinch of social responsibility.

The author spends much time looking at the political future of India and to areas of inquiry that have tested scholars for more than three generations. He wrestles with questions about the roles that print culture and capitalism play in creating political identity (especially “nationalist” identity) and in fostering a “public sphere”—that is, a political arena in which large numbers of “citizens” are able to become involved. Jeffrey provides good documentation for the political events, which he presents chronologically, discussing their effects on print media. In addition, he explores the relation-
ship of the Indian state to the press barons, who were intimidated during India's emergency period and then later befriended as influencers in the affairs of the Indian state. Jeffrey also discusses the growing clout of the media and how they are gaining attention in national and state capitals, particularly among the political power elite.

Students of journalism and related fields will find the book amazingly analytical and detailed. It is well written, with factual illustrations from secondary sources and scores of meaningful interviews, which lead to a deeper understanding of the Indian newspaper revolution. It is easy to read this fascinating book, and it should encourage anyone who relies on India's newspapers to think about the processes that make them. It is highly recommended.

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ROBERT F. ASH, PETER FERDINAND, and BRIAN HOOK, eds.
Hong Kong in Transition: The Handover Years
New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000
327 pages, $75.00 (hardcover)

The transition of Hong Kong has gone down as one of the greatest moments of the twentieth century: the night of solemnity, dignity, and vision when Britain returned a precious jewel to China. Britain lowered the Union Jack over Hong Kong for the last time and bid a tearful, poignant farewell to a tumultuous 156-year reign. “During that time Hong Kong has grown from a small coastal settlement into one of the leading cities and one of the greatest trading economies in the world,” Prince Charles said on behalf of Queen Elizabeth (South China Morning Post, 1 July 1997). Chris Patten, the colony's twenty-eighth and last governor, spelled out Britain's achievements in Hong Kong: "the rule of law; clean and light-handed government; the values of a free society; the beginnings of representative government and democratic accountability" (South China Morning Post, 1 July 1997). There were great concerns on Hong Kong about changes it would go through after the handover.

Hong Kong in Transition: The Handover Years is a by-product of a conference held in Chatham House in December 1997, where a group of international academics gathered to mark the passing of Hong Kong from British to Chinese sovereignty. The authors cover the issues that were regarded as fundamentally important for Hong Kong to survive in its same form for the years to come. The challenges encountered during the years of transition, both before and since retrocession, set against the background of related issues over the preceding four decades, are the material for the studies in this book.

The book is not so much a review of the past as a handbook for the future; it presents a wealth of information and is broadly divided into four parts: the Hong Kong business environment; government and politics; social discourse; and external relations, which form a basis for the practice of "One Country-Two Systems" in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Republic (HKSAR). Hong Kong has always been a center of international business, and the problems relating to the business environment are addressed in the first section. The first part of the book addresses how the transfer of sovereignty created both opportunities for, and threats to, business. The book also examines the relationship between business and government in Hong Kong. The financial crisis, which has been a major concern of many, is also examined, and the techniques of monetary management as adopted by the Chinese government are demonstrated. One of the authors compliments the Chinese government on its actions to preserve the creditability of Hong Kong's financial system.

The second section deals with the government and politics of Hong Kong. Hook examines the parameters established by the basic law and in particular the four con-
cepts that are key to the new arrangement: “One Country–Two Systems,” “fifty years with no systemic change,” “Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong,” and “a high degree of autonomy.” Porter notes that Hong Kong is possibly the only highly educated and developed society that is moving away from democracy, and thus he suggests a systematic audit of Hong Kong’s political institutions and culture to assess the development of democracy.

The third section deals with the widespread concern over human rights in Hong Kong. Also addressed is the role of Christian churches, the organizations that have been the most anxious of all those in the HKSAR government, given the treatment of Christians in Mainland China.

The last section deals with the basic framework of external relations of Hong Kong. Miguel Santos Neves examines the framework established by China for decision making on various kinds of international issues. Santos Neves identifies the factors likely to affect the HKSAR’s international status in future.

Many books originating from conferences are little more than collections of papers presented. This book, however, takes a different and more useful approach. Its real value lies in the way in which the chapters have been constructed to reflect the book’s broader theme. In general, the book has much to offer, and it will certainly be of real value to practitioners, academics, businessmen, and students alike.

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MICHIO MORISHIMA
Japan at a Deadlock
New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000
261 pages, $75.00 (cloth)

Japan at a Deadlock, by Michio Morishima, is a collection of essays, written from 1986 to 1998, on the socioeconomic aspects of the development of Japan. Morishima, currently working at the Suntory and Toyota International Centers for Economic and Related Disciplines, which is attached to the London School of Economics, was formerly Sir John Hicks Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Morishima’s book is more than a simple analysis of Japan’s current economic problems; it contains his penetrating observations on economic trends in Japan over the last 150 years, since the Meiji Reform in 1868. He makes comprehensive use of history, social psychology, education, and other disciplines as analytical tools.

The book’s central theme is straightforward: Japan’s current economic problems do not just concern banks and companies facing bankruptcy. If that were the case, the solution to the problem would be simple: Rescue them. Morishima, however, believes that Japan’s economic ills cannot be cured until something is done to stop the “corrupt” practices of Japanese enterprises and banks (217). Japan’s problem, he argues, is not economic but rather historical, sociological, educational, and psychological; and it is a long-term rather than a short-term problem. The so-called iron triangle (politicians, bureaucrats, and businessmen), which was once considered the strength of the Japanese economy, “has become rotten to the core” (220) and is the major problem for the Japanese economy. In addition, it has become impossible to continue the outdated Japanese style of management, with its traditions of lifetime employment, the seniority wage system, and company unions. Furthermore, Morishima believes that none of the reform measures necessary for a market-guided economy has been carried out so far.

In the 1990s, Japan entered a new era, and new types of people with postwar educational values began to dominate the country for the first time. They faced the problem of transitioning to a market-based economy, a change that has yet to occur. Morishima’s prognosis for Japan is bleak:
Japan, he believes, will not be in the top group of industrial countries.

By the early 1990s, government officials had been educated in the postwar way, emphasizing liberal education and individualistic values, whereas many of the top managers of business firms had been educated in the prewar, authoritarian system. In the political arena, Morishima argues, are many people with outdated modes of thinking, making it difficult for various groups to work together. Furthermore, the education system introduced by the U.S. occupation forces produced a significant number of "confused young people" in Japan. Newly educated officials work in the current government departments, but the political world operates in the traditional modes. In the business world, top executives still maintain the prewar ethos. The iron triangle has become a haven for the corrupt. But, the author explains, this "trinity is now in the last moment of its life" (230).

Japan has resisted changing its society to adapt to the new values of a global market economy. Japan's economic structure is ill suited to the introduction of a competitive mechanism and is in conflict with that of foreign powers who support free competition. Japan's system of helping big business enterprises has benefited politicians and government officials alike: Businessmen have liked the policies favorable to them, and politicians have enjoyed large political donations. High government officials have attained good posts in the business world. Thus, politicians have come to depend on bureaucrats, who have supported and looked after them.

To transform to a competitive economy Japan must learn everything anew. Its problem is further compounded by the fact that Japan has no able politicians capable of mapping out innovative political schemes to reform Japan. Morishima believes that as long as Japan's leaders remain weak and lack confidence, Japan is unlikely to have the strength to escape from the current trap. In the end, the author believes that Japan will be an internationally insignificant country with a reasonably high standard of living (245).

This book is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 sets the general tone of the book. Chapter 2 discusses the Japanese ethos in terms of ideology and economic activity and explains in detail the prewar tenets of Japanese Confucianism and the undigested democratic and liberal values introduced by the U.S. occupation forces. Chapter 3 elaborates on the transition from feudalism (the Tokugawa period) to capitalism (the Meiji Reform) and explains that the Meiji system continued the Tokugawa absolutist system. In short, the Meiji system was not a free enterprise system but contained all the trappings of the current iron triangle. Chapter 4 is about Japan's financial system. Chapter 5 treats Japanese enterprises as a private-sector bureaucracy. Chapter 6 analyzes the polarization and division under Japan's state capitalist system. Chapter 7 discusses the difficulty that the Japanese ethos poses for making the transition to a market economy. In chapter 8 Morishima gives his pessimistic view of Japan in the new century.

This book is not written for the beginning student of Japanese economics and politics. For the more advanced scholar, however, it provides a penetrating analysis of Japan's current economic ills from a wide variety of perspectives. Japan at a Deadlock is one of the most insightful books on Japan's current economic situation written by a Japanese scholar.

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