

- com/download/164855/978-3-412-50209-6_Leseprobe.pdf.
- 2 SPIEGEL-Gespräch: „Ein Schauspieler im Kreml“. Die Historikerin Susanne Schattenberg erkundet Leonid Breschnew, den Menschen hinter dem KP-Apparatschik, und erzählt zugleich die Geschichte der Sowjetunion neu, in: Der Spiegel Nr. 1/2018, 30. Dezember 2017, S. 28–31.
 - 3 Bei seinem ersten Besuch in der Bundesrepublik fünf Jahre zuvor, im Mai 1973, soll Brežnev sein Gastgeschenk, ein Mercedes-Cabrio 450 SLC, gleich nach der Übergabe am Gästehaus der Bundesregierung auf dem Petersberg bei Bonn auf der Probefahrt nach wenigen Metern mittels Fahrfehler beschädigt haben. Die Medienberichte dazu weichen inhaltlich allerdings stark von einander ab. Unverkennbar indes hatten die Gastgeber den Geschmack des hohen Gastes getroffen, da er sich umgehend hinter das Steuer setzte und los fuhr.
 - 4 „Diese vagabundierende Anekdote spielt am 4. Mai 1978: Leonid Breschnew, Staatschef der damaligen Sowjetunion ist in Deutschland auf Staatsbesuch. Viele Menschen säumen die Straßen. Breschnew befragt über seinen Dolmetscher den Außenminister Genscher: „Haben Sie die Leute bestellt zur Ehre des sowjetischen Volkes?“ Über den deutschen Dolmetscher antwortet Genscher: „Nein, die Leute haben heute frei. Es ist Himmelfahrt.“ Nur dem deutschen Dolmetscher fällt das Zögern auf, mit dem der russische Dolmetscher das übersetzt: „Sie feiern den Tag der internationalen Raumfahrt“ (nach Ralf Drews). C. Gruber, Wort zur Woche vom 26.05.2014 – Himmelfahrt = Tag der Internationalen Raumfahrt?, in: Website der Evangelischen Kirchengemeinde Empfingen 2014, <http://www.evangelisch-in-empingen.de/wort-zur-woche-vom-26-05-2014-himmelfahrt-tag-der-internationalen-raumfahrt/> (Zugriff 6. März 2020). Seit 1962 wurde in der UdSSR der 12. April als „Tag der Kosmonauten“ (Den' kosmonavtiki) begangen. Offenkundig scheute sich sein Dolmetscher, Brežnev gegenüber den religiösen Charakter des auch in der Russischen Orthodoxen Kirche begangenen Feiertags Christi Himmelfahrt (*Voznesenie Isusa Christa*) zu benennen.
 - 5 E. Meier, Breschnews Boomtown: Alltag und Mobilisierung in der Stadt der LKWs. Paderborn 2016; Dies.: Brežnevs Ingenieure: Die Stadt Naberežnye Čelny und das Lastwagenwerk KamAZ, in: B. Belge/M. Deuerlein (Hrsg.),

Goldenes Zeitalter der Stagnation? Perspektiven auf die sowjetische Ordnung der Brežnev-Ära, Tübingen 2014, S. 156-177.

Hendrik Schulte Nordholt: China and the Barbarians. Resisting the Western World Order. Leiden: Leiden University Press 2018, 464 pp.

Reviewed by
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Hendrik Schulte Nordholt provides an informed account of the conflicting narratives, traditions, and cultural idiosyncrasies that co-determine China's fate in the 21st century. His book, which is an updated translation of his original monograph in Dutch from 2015, could be organised differently, but that is most of all a matter of taste and preferences.

Chapter 1 deals with the “lofty classical order” and focuses on the Qin and Han kingdoms and the concept of “All under Heaven”, elevating morality over the law. This understanding of “regional governance” as we would probably label it today, found expression in the tributary system, in which closer “barbarians” (neighbouring peoples) had to pay to the centre to get protection. The compelling lessons of the corresponding “mandate from heaven” made the emperor's power absolute but also performance-based (at least in theory). If the “son of heaven” did not act to the satisfaction of the people, he could theoretically be removed (or he killed his

opponents). Another interesting aspect is that “all under heaven” originally only meant the “Sinitic” sphere, which also served as the reference for the world – a limited perception of global politics that led to a harsh encounter with the “western barbarians” in the 19th century. Accordingly, the second chapter deals with a very powerful narrative that still is in use today: The “century of humiliation” by western powers and Japan (1839–1949). The naïve expectation that the western imperialists could, as other foreign powers before, be seduced and tamed by the Chinese culture, turned out a “fatal miscalculation” (p. 45). Four foreign attacks on Chinese sovereignty constitute the century of humiliation: the two opium wars, the crackdown of the Boxer Rebellion and the Japanese aggression in the 1930s. Chapter 3 then moves to “A New Beginning” starting with Sun Yatsen’s presidency of the new Republic of China in 1912. The ROC built on three principles: nationalism, welfare for the people and power to the people (pp. 71–73). Chapter 4 tackles present president Xi Jinping’s dream and provides an interesting description of Xi and his father – including surrounding narratives. Schulte Nordholt enlightens the reader knowledgeably about the changing factions managing China’s fate for the past seventy and more years. He reckons that even though Xi Jinping seems to have adopted a new leadership style, his behaviour is also in line with old traditions. One preferred notion the author employs is “old wine in new bottles” (p. 97) – nothing new under the Chinese sun (p. 112). Even though Xi Jinping has attained additional titles (core leader, commander-in-chief, among others), that make him only comparable to

Mao (and in some aspects even surpass the Great Leader), Schulte Nordholt sees more continuity. “The eternal party” is the title of chapter 5, which explores the nature of the Chinese Communist Party and the party system including its prospects. The CCP’s future rests on four pillars (domestic security agencies, military, party organisation and propaganda) (p. 126). The party system’s future will largely depend on its performance: “[...] the core question is whether the political system is capable of solving the country’s gigantic social and economic problems” (p. 113). The author further assumes that Marx would approve some aspects of today’s China, while Orwell would understand it but then also tellingly asks whether China is (still) Marxist and if Marxism is western (pp. 123f.). Chapter 6 tackles “An Alternative to the Party?” and refers to David Shambaugh’s seven schools of thought (of the hundred that reportedly existed during the Golden Age of philosophy). Schulte Nordholt reports on eight interviews with exceptional Chinese personalities (all men): a diplomat, a legal expert, a philosopher, a mathematician, a writer, a Buddhist, an economist and an anthropologist. Rather interesting reading, but style-wise and in argumentative terms quite different than the other chapters. In chapter 7, the author then goes back to history (he never really abandons it) and discusses “The Perception of History: From Supremacy to Shame”. Schulte Nordholt provides a very insightful summary of the historical memory in China: Even though Marxism and Maoism reject China’s past as feudal, the historical references to Chinese imperial greatness fill much more these days (p. 177). Chapter 8 tackles Mao’s and Deng’s

foreign policy: “From Rebellion to Harmony” and jumps a bit from Mao’s wars and swinging relationships with India, the Soviet Union/Russian Federation and the United States to today’s situation. The author provides quite perceptive accounts of Sino-American (most important but also most complex) and Russian-Chinese relations (today reversed roles: “Little Bear and Big Panda”). Under Xi, “to hide brightness and cherish obscurity” as a precondition for a silent rise (as preached by Deng) appears to be of the past (p. 229). While the West concluded that sovereignty did not prevent the two world wars, they established international organisations: “The founding of the United Nations, the European Union and countless other international organisations proves that the transfer of power from national states to supranational institutions is irreversible. The success of that process is not universal, and certainly hotly disputed, but the days of absolute sovereignty in the West are numbered.” The Chinese seem to have drawn opposite conclusions from history: “Not the excess, but rather the shortage of sovereignty caused the string of plagues inflicted by foreigners upon the ancient empire [...]” (Opium Wars, Boxer rebellion, Japanese aggression, p. 230). “The New Nationalism” is subject of the ninth chapter and starts off with stating that the People’s Republic is not willing to take the lead in world politics. The author cannot even ascertain a “Chinese Monroe doctrine” for Asia, but sees reason for concern: “At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Chinese nationalism has devolved into a complex cocktail of complacent paternalism, pent-up resentment and racial superiority endangering

the peace and security of the region” (p. 255). “The Party on a Dead-End Street” is the title of Chapter number ten. It deals with the problematic redefinition of terms such as democracy, human rights, and rule of law that lose their original meaning in the Party’s new interpretation. Nonetheless, Schulte Nordholt deems the days of the Communist Party to be numbered due to institutional and cultural corruption, nepotism, the absence of virtue and respect for the small people, and last, but not least, the gap between language and reality (pp. 266–273). “The Third Way” (chapter 11) provides philosophical reflections on human nature and the ideal state – in western and eastern traditions. According to Confucius, the “world of great harmony” once existed and Hu Angang, a prominent academic predicting China’s new rise, expects that the renewed “Great Harmony” will be realised by 2030. Zhao Tingyang, the first advocate of a “All under Heaven” model for the 21st century, sees it as a “vaguer vision for the future in which virtue and harmony prevail, and which is led by a global government.” This chapter is a captivating read and leads to the final one, “The World of the Great Harmony” (chapter 12), pointing at internal contradictions (preaching great harmony abroad, causing great disharmony in East Asia, p. 293). The author expects five foreign policy priorities to receive more attention: the transformation of the South China Sea into a Chinese inland sea; waging a permanent “Cold War” with Japan, compelling the US to recognise China as East Asia’s dominant power; the creation of an own international order; and conducting a more active soft power policy (pp. 294–297). In short, “Globalisation with

Chinese characteristics means that the free flow of goods and services is embraced, but not the flow of ideas” (p. 297).

The author excels as a knowledgeable Sinologist who often shows the (western) reader, where the European or North American mind-set is challenged to comprehend the internal contradictions in Chinese self-image and visions of world order. In the very beginning, Schulte Nordholt quotes philosopher Tu Weiming, who regards China as a battlefield of socialism, liberalism and Confucianism. Samuel Huntington had once predicted that China would eventually go back to its own traditions and abandon socialism and liberalism, as they constitute western concepts.¹ On the other hand, the book later demonstrates the very Chinese outlook, when it again refers to Tu Weiming’s suggestion, that China should aim at a combination of the three (pp. 282f.) – an idea, that would conventionally be considered as impossible in western eyes.

Sometimes, the author writes a bit elusively that Xi has introduced a new authoritarian way, and then again partly discharges this as a narrative. The same holds true for the motives behind the large-scale anti-corruption campaign: a true fight against wide-spread graft to please the masses or a popular measure to purge the party and leadership from supports of his predecessor, Jiang Zemin? He concludes: probably both (pp. 107f.). One shortcoming is that the author writes with authority – certainly based on decade-long insights into the political intrigues of Chinese politics – but often without references. This makes it difficult for the non-expert and the specialists to know whether his assumptions are unprovable facts or simply interpretations

– competing with other narratives in the guessing game.

One of the critical aspects could be that the book does not entirely live up to its title (but in a way achieves more): It discusses the traditional distinction of Chinese civilisation into three circles (civilized centre, close barbarians, far-away barbarians, with the close ones able to be “Sinicized”, that is, civilized). But it doesn’t go deeper into that narrative when it comes to China’s struggle with weak soft power or the re-invented Mandate from Heaven in a 21st century version of the imperial notion of *tianxia* (All Under Heaven). The very book title insinuates that China (still) regards the west as barbarians – in turn, the Sinitic world counts as centre of civilisation. If we then turn to debates on Chinese-led world order, a corresponding civilising mission would be the obvious conclusion. Here, the literature on civilising projects in and from China could be covered more.² While the original Dutch title only mentioned “China and the Barbarians”, the English version added the resistance to western world order. For scholars of International Relations, the debates on US American decline, the end of “Pax Americana” and the (potential) rise of a global “Pax Sinica” are probably not satisfactorily dealt with. But it is not the point of the book to engage exhaustively in western IR debates³ – it rather tries to give the reader an intimate and puzzling insight into China’s philosophical debates, the consequences of instrumentalised historical referencing, the various sources of legitimacy for the Party and the problems of the People’s Republic to deal with multiple identities.

In sum, this is a very good read for everyone trying to understand China's identity struggles and where the Middle Kingdom may be heading in the 21st century.

Notes

- 1 S. P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York 1996, pp. 9–19.
- 2 See S. Harrell, Introduction: Civilizing Projects and the Reaction to Them, in: St. Harrell (ed.), *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*. Seattle 1995; P. Nyíri, *The Yellow Man's Burden: Chinese Migrants on a Civilizing Mission*, in: *The China Journal* 56 (2006); T. Heberer, *The Contention between Han "Civilizers" and Yi "Civilizees" over Environmental Governance: A Case Study of Liangshan Prefecture in Sichuan*, in: *The China Quarterly* 219 (2014), pp. 736–759; H. R. Clark, *The Sinitic Encounter in Southeast China Through the First Millennium CE*, Berlin 2015; J. Schneider, *Missionizing, Civilizing, and Nationizing. Linked Concepts of Compelled Change*, in: Chen-tian Kuo (ed.), *Religion and Nationalism in Chinese Societies*. Amsterdam 2017.
- 3 See, for instance, Y. Xuetong, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, ed. by D. A. Bell, S. Zhe, translated by E. Ryden, Princeton 2011; G. J. Ikenberry, W. Jisi, Z. Feng (eds.), *America, China, and the Struggle for World Order. Ideas, Traditions, Historical Legacies, and Global Visions*, New York 2015; D. Shambaugh, *China Goes Global*, Oxford 2013; B. Wang (ed.), *Chinese Visions of World Order. Tianxia, Culture and World Politics*, Durham 2017; K. Brown, *China's World. What does China want?*, London 2017; W. A. Callahan, E. Barabantseva (eds.), *China Orders the World. Normative Soft Power and Foreign Policy*, Washington 2011; F.-L. Wang, *The China Order. Centralia, World Empire, and the Nature of Chinese Power*, Albany 2017.

David C. Engerman: *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2018, 501 pp.

Reviewed by
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For a long time, studies of the Cold War reflected two theoretical currents buried deep in the foundations of Cold War historiography. The first was an aversion to the use of interpretive frameworks born of political economy, particularly after the bitter fight that banished the so-called revisionists – in fact the first generation of historians – from the field. The second current was the international relations theory of realism that in effect engendered and became part of the genetic code of Cold War studies. This theory accommodated many contending arguments but generally saw the state as monolithic, and acting in an international arena according to a set of established interests. Because states were unitary actors, policies such as international aid were seen to be coherent expressions of these predetermined state interests, and therefore they could be analysed as easily understood expressions of the ideological competition that organized the Cold War world. Other fields of historical study, meanwhile, were busy producing historiographical innovations. Studies in British imperial history fragmented the state, seeing in it a conglomerate of diverse constituents, visions, purpose and outcomes. Postcolonial studies provincialized Euro-