

Judith Shapiro. *China's Environmental Challenges*. Second ed. China Today Series Cambridge, England. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016. Pp. 200. Paper. \$21.95.

Judith Shapiro, Professor of Global Environmental Politics in the School of International Service at American University in Washington DC, writes an in-depth analysis of China's environmental policies, and the geopolitical factors that shaped how China underwent industrialization. Shapiro argues that China's environmental policies were limited by the structure of an authoritarian state and the lack of public input. China, however, had the ability to bypass the negative effects of industrialization that characterized Western development and modernized while focusing on renewable energy and environmentally-conscious growth. Shapiro states that China's environmental challenges were tied to domestic political structures, rapid economic growth, and an intense phase of globalization in which the entire planet is involved. Her analysis is effective and clear because Shapiro organizes her study into five core analytical concepts: globalization, governance, national identity, civil society, and environmental justice. Secondary sources on environmental history critique western scholarship's depiction of China's environmentalism, and historically grounds this contemporary study as far back as 1894 with the first Sino-Japanese War.

Shapiro argues that globalization put a strain on China to deliver raw materials such as coal to the western developed nation. The inclusion of China's carbon industry demonstrates that the nation depended on a global trade network forcing raw material extraction in order to maintain economic growth. As the middle class continued to expand, so did the demand for consumer products. The unrest caused by the country's limitation of individual freedoms was mitigated by its economic growth and its rising middle class that gives poor citizens the hope of upward mobility. China's leaders often argue that as a developing nation its environmental policies are justified even if they are one of the largest sources of pollution and contamination. However, this book's source base adequately challenges the narrative that China is a belligerent polluter and also highlights the government's

commitment to curbing pollution through its cooperation as a member of environmental summits.

Consumerism among the new middle-class forced China to continue extracting raw materials to use for trade. Yet, the infamous pollution that plagues Beijing is seen as an embarrassment to the national identity and receives criticism by the new consumer class. Efforts to curb this pollution often meant relocating industries into vulnerable regions with minority populations and causing major health risks. On the other hand, China's efforts to protect national parks has often resulted in the destruction of local economies. Thus, Shapiro effectively argues that future environmental policies must be carried out in discussion with local populations that are both affected by these policies and are privy to the environment not fully understood by a faraway centralized government. Research weighs environmental policy effects on a variety of factors including class, trade and foreign policy. This is supported with translated scholarship and news sources within China, juxtaposed with Western scholarship and U.S. State Department primary sources.

Overall Shapiro produces a well written and complex book of China's environmental challenges and policy. The second edition demonstrates China's policy shift on climate change, and highlights efforts taken by non-governmental organizations to mitigate climate change. This book is also relevant to understanding the environmental policies of western developed nations. New analysis shows the impact that well-intentioned environmental policies have on minority populations, analyzing the political structure and other factors vital to understanding just how complex environmental policies are. China's own economic growth is enough to contest the idea that it is a developing nation. Thus, today it is a vital comparison to the challenges that democratic capitalist societies face in addressing climate change and tackling environmental issues such as water scarcity. Shapiro concludes the book with the hope that China is in a position to lead the way in eco-friendly policies and culture that can benefit both developed and developing nations.

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