

REZENSIONEN

Harish Kapur: China and the European Economic Community: The New Connection.

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In the "Introduction" to this book Harish KAPUR claims that his "form of analysis is a reaction against a disturbingly pervasive trend amongst some scholars to indulge in conceptualisation or theorisation without first taking the trouble to acquire the appropriate factual information. The net result of this careless approach can be a dangerous temptation for the scholar to choose only the data that supports his thesis ..." (p.XIII)

KAPUR divides his book into two parts. Part I analyses China's changing attitude towards the Community since its establishment. Part II contains important documents available on the subject. Let us, first of all, have a look on the author's ability to establish the appropriate factual information. In part II he lists amongst the "Documents" the "Trade Agreement between the European Economic Community and the People's Republic of China, 3 April 1978" and quotes the following source: "Official Journal of the European Communities, 11 May 1978, Document No. L 123". (p.107) He then, for example, reproduces ARTICLE 4 as follows:

1. The People's Republic of China will give favourable consideration to imports from the European Economic Community. To this end the Chinese authorities will see to it that Community exporters have the possibility of participating fully in opportunities for trade with China.
2. The European Economic Community will accord increasing liberalisation of imports from the People's Republic of China. To this end it will endeavour progressively to introduce measures extending the list of products for which imports from China have been liberalized and to increase the amounts of quotas. The manner in which this is to be implemented will be examined within the Joint Committee." (p.160)

But the source mentioned by KAPUR on page 107 has the following text:

1. The People's Republic of China will give favourable consideration to imports from the European Economic Community. To this end the competent Chinese authorities will ensure that Community exporters have the possibility of participating fully in opportunities for trade with China.
2. The European Economic Community will strive for an increasing liberalization of imports from the People's Republic of China. To this end it will endeavour progressively to introduce measures extending the list of products for which imports from China have

been liberalized and to increase the amounts of quotas. The procedure for implementation will be examined within the framework of the Joint Committee."

Thus having established a different text - possibly by translating a French version into English - KAPUR can now indulge in the work of interpreting the differences. He compares the 1984 cooperation agreement between the EEC and the PRC with the 1978 trade agreement: "It is significant, however, that there is one provision in the cooperation agreement which - at least in its terminology - was more restrictive than the preceding trade agreement. Whereas, under article 4 of the 1978 agreement both the parties agreed that they 'will accord' (EEC) or 'will give' (China) favourable consideration to the liberalization of imports, the corresponding article in the new agreement (article 5) differs slightly in that China will 'give' and the EEC will only 'strive' to increase imports".(p.79) Unfortunately - for the author - the correct texts of the pertaining provisions in both agreements are exactly identical.

In Table 2:4 the "Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between member states of EEC and China" is listed according to a compilation by the author. (p.32) For the United Kingdom he has "January 1950", but in fact diplomatic relations between the two states were only established on 17 June 1954; for the Netherlands he has "March 1950" (correctly 19 November, 1954), and for Denmark "January 1950" (correctly 11 May, 1950).

It is meritorious that KAPUR uses German sources, but either is his command of this language feeble or he did not care for proof-reading. On page 21 he quotes MAJONICA's book as follows: "Bonn-Peking: Die Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zur Volkesrepublik China"; in the "Selected bibliography" the title is further corrupted to: "... Die Beziehungen der Bundesrepublik Deutschland sur Volkesrepublik", and the publisher is now written "Kholhammer". (p.102) And so on: "Bonn Hält Senatskritik für ungerechtfertigt' Deutsche Press Argenteur" [... ungerechtfertigt', Deutsche Presse-Agentur] (p.22); "Industriekurier" [Industriekurier] (p.22); "Neu Zurcher Zeitung" [Neue Zürcher Zeitung] (p.43); "China Aktuell" [China aktuell] (p.72). It is then no wonder that German names are corrupted: "Scholoeman Siemag" [Schloemann-Siemag] (p.75 and p.350); "Otto Wolf von Amerongen" [Otto Wolff von Amerongen] (p.9 and p.359); "Volkswagen" is written correctly in the text, but the index has "Volkeswagen" (p.351); the name of the former German chancellor Erhard is written "Erhardt" (p.13); a.s.o.

Members of other nations fare no better. To mention just a few examples: R. Brugha is written "Burgha" (p.61); the then president of the European Parliament Piet Dankert is "Denkert" in the text (p.88) and "Dankart" in the index (p.348); Simone Veil becomes "Weil" both in text (p.88) and index (p.351); Giolitti becomes "Giolotti" in the index (p.349); Jardine Matheson becomes "Jardine Mattheson" (p.243). Christopher

Soames is quoted having made a speech in Beijing on 7 May, 1984 (p.36); in fact this speech was made on 7 May, 1975.

By now the reader will fear the worst when it comes to Chinese names. No trouble has been taken by the author to explain his method of handling Chinese names. Through the concurrent use of the Wade-Giles and the Pinyin transcription systems Chinese names can be mixed up, which in fact happens in this book - and makes it extremely difficult for the non-expert. So we meet "Deng Ying-Chao (Chair person of the National Peoples [sic] Congress) in June 1980". (p.88) [By the way, Deng became chairperson of the 3rd session of the 5th National People's Congress only in August 1980.] The index has "Deng Yinqchao" (p.348); in Pinyin which dominates in the text we would have: Deng Yingchao. Ji Pengfei is "Chi Peng fei" on page 28, on page 56 he emerges amongst Chinese "dignatories" [dignitaries] but correctly written "Ji Pengfei", in the index he becomes "Chi Penfei" (p.347). Li Shude is written either correctly (cf. index p.349) or wrongly "Li shude" (cf. page VI. Li is indeed indexed under p.XII, but if the reader looks up p.XII he will merely find KAPUR's other works listed.) And so on, and so forth.

Suffice it to criticize the "appropriate factual information" and let us draw our attention to the economic and political arguments of Harish KAPUR who is Professor at the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva. In a sub-chapter on the "Deceleration of economic relations" he asks whether it could not "be argued ... that Sino-EEC economic interaction has reached a plateau with no real prospects of any dramatic improvement?" (p.77) Among the four factors which appear to support this hypothesis he maintains that "it is accepted that the Common Market countries are generally less competitive than Japan and the United States on a wide range of items in which China may be interested." (p.77) One reason for this is, in KAPUR's opinion, that "the compulsory overhead social costs [in Western Europe] are considerable". (p.78) No conclusive proof is given for this statement, neither for his belief that "since 1974 Western Europe has opted for the present as against the future". (p.78) For the reader cannot be convinced by the feeble-minded declaration of a certain French industrialist (in: *Le Monde*, 26.2.1985): "If the American and the Japanese growth rates continue to develop at the rate of more than 4% during the next two to four years, and Europe continues to stagnate at between 0 and 2%, there will be no European industries left, except for some scattered vestiges of large historical monuments and beaches for American and Japanese tourists". (p.78)

The disappointing performance of EEC-China economic relations could - in KAPUR's opinion - also be attributed to the embargo by COCOM. (p.80f.) Aren't it just the Americans who because of competitive reasons try to back the restrictive attitude of COCOM? KAPUR sees the reappearance of the Soviet Union as China's new economic partner as a problem for Sino-EEC economic relations (p.81) owing to

technology (p.82). Only a short look at the structure of technologies imported by the Chinese and their development plans would make evident that they have opted for the most modern equipments and procedures - and these can only be supplied by Western industrial countries.

In his "Conclusions" KAPUR tries to convince his readers that there is a "preponderance" [sic] of political factors in the Chinese attitude towards the EC. China "never abandoned the hope that the region [EC] would one day speak with one voice." (p.93) The Community's behavioural pattern towards China was in contrast "principally influenced by economic factors, dictated by the very nature of its functions and its goal, which are - at least for the moment - essentially economic." (p.93) But then he states that "the post-Maoist leadership defined new goals of internal modernization - goals which were essentially economic ..." (p.94) A clear distinction between the two realms of politics and economy is not proven by KAPUR - one has to ask whether this in the modern world is any longer a pertinent distinction at all.

KAPUR tries to convince his readers that "a general process of deceleration set in from 1981 onwards, leaving the Community far behind some of China's other major partners." (p.95) The worst area was trade, which is illustrated by some figures from 1983 and 1984. But the actual development took another turn as can be seen from the following table

Foreign Trade of the People's Republic of China

(turnover in percentages)

Country/Year	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
EC	11.7	10.2	13.1	10.3	12.1
Japan	25.4	21.4	23.1	26.1	30.4
USA	14.3	14.8	10.3	12.1	10.6

Source: Calculated after Hagemann, DIW Wochenbericht 29/86, 17 July 86, p.374.

In his "Introduction" KAPUR maintains that the above-mentioned careless approach could lead the scholar to focus on "methodological perfection which precludes one from giving an answer to any but the most trivial questions". (p.XIII) Methodological imperfection led him to give the most trivial answers to questions the answering of which had deserved a serious and careful study.

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