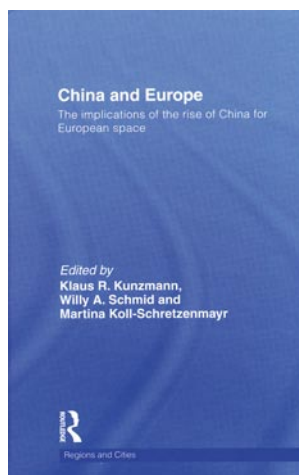


Kunzmann, Klaus R.; Schmid, Willy A.; Koll-Schretzenmayr, Martina (eds.) (2009): China and Europe—The implications of the rise of China for European space. London/New York: Routledge. 275 pp

Kathy Pain

Published online: 26 March 2010
© Springer-Verlag 2010



This edited book engages with the huge interest in the development of China in the current millennium and in China's relations with Europe. Its seventeen chapters present a range of perspectives on the likely consequences for Europe of China's rise as a world economic power and their implications for European strategy. The editors' introduction does not explicitly summarize or comment on the separate contributions. Instead significant changes in China and Europe are reviewed including the transformation of European metropolitan regions, and three scenarios for emergent China-Europe relations are put forward, setting the scene for the project the book as a whole comprises—to define an

agenda for the European space in a dramatically changing world order.

The book is organised in two sections consisting of eight and nine chapters each respectively. The first section focuses on the question whether China constitutes a challenge for policy and spatial planning in Europe whilst the second section consists of a series of individual scenarios for how Europe might evolve during the first half of the millennium in the shadow of China, each one suggesting lessons that need to be taken on board in Europe today. This thematic division is not rigidly imposed however and, in practice, most contributors throughout the book look beyond the challenges Europe faces to consider what should be done.

While the collective consists of an assortment of specific preoccupations and, in some cases contradictory, perspectives on the changes and key issues to be addressed, significantly the book as a whole is not so much about China as about Europe. The final paragraph of the editors' introduction (pp.14–15) expresses a view reflecting this emphasis that surfaces in slightly different ways across the narratives and which could serve as a conclusion to the book. This is that averting dangers identified for Europe in a globalizing world—increasing spatial fragmentation and polarization—is not dependent on competition with China but on sustaining an 'old' asset, the European social model.

Regrettably the focus on Europe which runs through the book frequently tends to fix the consideration of space within a territorialist paradigm, albeit this is EU as opposed to state-centric. There is a recurrent emphasis on Europe as a societal entity defined by geo-political boundaries hence space is often framed in ways that are territorially and locally embedded. For example in Part 1, concerns for Europe identified in Chaps. 4–6—'territorial labour markets', 'lifestyle jobs' (Lovering, pp. 79–80, p. 80), 'people and place' (Turok, p. 92) and 'contaminating European culture'

Professor K. Pain (✉)
School of Real Estate & Planning,
The University of Reading, Whiteknights,
RG6 6UD Reading, UK
e-mail: k.pain@reading.ac.uk

(Banerjee, p. 101)—highlight the rights to space of local communities. Contributions by Kemming (Chap. 2) and Wegener (Chap. 3) draw attention to the need for Europe to adjust to global changes that reflect the development needs of China in relation to energy resources and climate change, but there is a lack of clarity in chapters taking a defensive stance on European engagement with globalization about how economic adjustment required to support the social model will take place in the context of globalizing high, as well as low, skill labour markets.

Friedmann (Chap. 1) and Thierstein (Chap. 7) stand out in presenting relational accounts of Europe's integration in the world economy through its major metropolitan regions. They defend the importance of opportunities for economic growth presented for Europe by its connectivity to the global knowledge economy, in which China is playing an increasingly important role. Their contributions stress the need for direct European policy engagement *with* China and *with* globalization. Rossi adds support for this global perspective based on the case of growing China-Switzerland cultural and economic relations (Chap. 8). In Part 2, Prosek's nuanced reflections on intersections between Germany and China witnessed recently at Dortmund (Chap. 13, pp. 215–217) extend this thinking, pointing to the need to understand and engage with Europe's new economic space as a process which is borderless. Following on in this vein, in Chap. 16 Krueger makes the important point that the expansion of China-related industrial activity in Hamburg to other parts of Germany and Europe, can occur synchronously with an absolute rise in trade *at* Hamburg (p. 251). In other words, spatial relations defined by flows should not be seen as constituting a zero-sum game; post-territorial *spatial* governance should be open to global flows associated with European 'gateway' functions (p. 255).

Both Prosek's and Krueger's accounts draw attention to the importance of a new conceptualization of space which has important implications for governance, strategic policy and planning which are the particular concerns of Chaps. 9–12 of the book. Each of the authors of these chapters proposes a framework to address "the challenges from the east" (p. 137) for sustainable development (Miles), cross-border governance (Knippschild), spatial design (Van den Broeck)

and strategic planning (Albrechts). Both Albrechts and Van den Broeck call for a new kind of spatial planning to reflect complex European local-global relations but the difficulty of countering a positivist approach in the formulation of new models is evident. The challenge is not 'the East' but the incorporation of a poststructuralist conceptualization of space in territorially constructed, 'place'-embedded practices that are gaining prominence since the adoption of the 2008 'Green Paper' on territorial cohesion and publication of the 2009 'Barca Report'.

The final chapters of the book include a dystopic vision for Europe from Faludi (Chap. 14), in which the ESDP (European Spatial Development Perspective) morphs into the 'European Security and Defence Policy' in an extended, but increasingly divided, 'PanEurAsian' territory. Keiner (Chap. 15) envisages a depressing scenario both for Europe and for China which, despite its economic rise, is characterized by increasing urban-rural polarization. Finally, Doucet (Chap. 17) ends with a moral tale which, to an extent, links the book's varied contributions. In 2050, China and Europe have reversed their social models but crucially, China has achieved this alongside stronger connectivity to the global free market economy. Individual liberty and redistribution of wealth go hand in hand with public land ownership and state control of natural resources, economic and physical planning are integrated, creating something close to a Chinese utopia.

As would be expected in any predictive exercise, some details in this and other scenarios have already been overtaken by events. The European Treaty of Lisbon was ratified on 01 December 2009, with France, the Netherlands and Ireland as signatories, and China's eco-city industry has, for the present at least, faltered at Dongtan. Nevertheless, the lesson from Doucet's tale seems indisputable—all territorial boundaries are nonsensical, a "global federation of human-kind" is what's needed (p. 269).

Overall this book makes an important contribution to the discursive international literature about contemporary transitions in development and space, benchmarking European debate on the definition and role of space, policy and planning, at a time when informed deliberation and action across these spheres is vitally important.