

## FOREWORD

### **Reform, Opening and Adjustments: Issues in Chinese Public Policies and Foreign Relations**

This third and final issue of Volume 1 of *Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and Strategic Relations: An International Journal* (2015) represents a collection of research articles covering some of the most pertinent aspects of the state and changes in the political economy and strategic relations of today's China.

Among the first five papers focusing on China's domestic political economy are Housi Cheng (程厚思), Qian Forrest Zhang (張謙) and John A. Donaldson's article on the impact of the Chinese government's reform and open-door (*gaige kaifang*, 改革開放) policy on the economic, social and political characteristics of the rural communities, Kwok Tong Soo (蘇國棟)'s on the policy debate over urban graduate unemployment in China and recent trend and nature of such unemployment, and Loo-See Beh (馬露絲)'s on the the implementation of public-private partnerships and the key challenges of managing them in China and Australia with the two countries' different stages of maturity in implementation framework.

Cheng, Zhang and Donaldson's article "On the social and political effects of opening in rural China", using three Chinese villages in the

Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture (紅河哈尼族彝族自治州) in the southeastern part of the southwestern province of Yunnan (雲南省) as case studies, explores the varied rural adjustments in response to the opening to the outside world during the present Chinese economic reform era. For instance, a village under study which is located adjacent to the prefecture capital of Mengzi (蒙自) responded to the opening, brought by the expansion of Mengzi from a medium-sized county town to an expansive prefecture capital due to the movement of the prefecture government there from the county of Gejiu (個舊), with a unique establishment of a shareholding company that controls the collective assets of the village and manages their commercial developments. On the contrary, the other two villages under study have responded to the opening in different ways – one involving agribusiness investment shifting mainly traditional subsistent family farming to corporate agriculture, and the other involving construction of new roadway which facilitated the implementation of government-led anti-poverty projects.

Moving from the rural to largely urban setting, in the next article in this journal issue, “Recent trends in graduate unemployment and higher education in China”, Soo discusses the relationship between the expansion of the university sector in China and the rise in graduate unemployment. Proposing several possible explanations for graduate unemployment, and presenting data on the rapid expansion of the Chinese university system especially since the reform of 1999, Soo opines that this expansion might be an important cause of the rise in graduate unemployment. While government policies are already in place to address this problem, the author discusses some additional proposals for future reform of the system.

While Soo looks at the issues of education and unemployment, focusing on the broader provision of public goods is Beh’s paper, “Managing across public-private partnerships: A review of

implementation in China and Australia”, which looks at public-private partnerships (PPPs), examining the development in mainland China and the Chinese Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong of this latest “new public management” of the provision of public infrastructure with a focus on services and/or outputs, juxtaposing it with Australian experience in the evolution of PPPs. Noting that PPPs may be a new initiative and still developing in mainland China, Beh suggests that China could benefit from PPP experiences in other countries in areas where the private sector has a proven track record in the successful delivery of assets and their ancillary service needs and even within China, the relatively better PPP governance in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. In short, she observes, there is a general need to explore what could be learned through global and local comparisons across all existing PPPs.

Two other papers here focus on China’s strategic relations with foreign countries.

Beginning this collection of articles is Joseph Yu-shek Cheng (鄭宇碩) and Huangao Shi (史煥高)’s paper on China’s resource diplomacy in Africa and the dilemma China faces amidst her distinct strategic and economic interests in the continent interfacing with the latter’s overall domestic political and socioeconomic malaise and instability and the African political leaders’ own political calculus when dealing with China. As presented in their engrossing article, “China’s African policy – Increasing importance and active adjustments”, Cheng and Shi’s study is in-depth in analysis and expansive in scope, tracing the evolvment of Sino-African relations, and identifying the critical era-specific politico-economic factors in transition. In addition, the paper also brings forward a less emphasised area generally in studies on China’s African policy – the Taiwan factor, and accords it the prominence it deserves.

Finally, in this collection's closing article Hasan Yaser Malik looks at the intense Sino-Indian politico-economic and diplomatic rivalry with particular reference to the playing field of the Eastern Himalayan region. His paper "Siliguri: A geopolitical manoeuvre corridor in the Eastern Himalayan region for China and India" approaches this critical subject by focusing on the strategically important but geopolitically volatile Siliguri Corridor of the Indian West Bengal, located between Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and being gateway to India's Seven Sister States as well as in close proximity to China via the Chumbi Hills of the Eastern Himalayas.

This journal issue ends with a book review by Chang Le (常樂) on Yanqing Jiang's edited volume, *China: Trade, foreign direct investment, and development strategies* (2014).

This present issue of *Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and Strategic Relations: An International Journal*, the third and final issue (December) of this year thus significantly completes the 2015 inaugural volume beginning with the April issue (Vol. 1, No. 1), followed by the special issue of Vol. 1, No. 2 (August), *Crossing the Chinese frontier: Nation, community, identity and demographic mobility*, that focuses on the interconnecting issues of population mobility, community formation and shifting ethnic identity as related to the transmuting notion of the Chinese nation amidst the context of increasingly intricate cross-border business and economic nexus and growing transnationalism. The present issue, Vol. 1, No. 3, hence brings the inaugural volume to a close by returning its focus onto some of the most critical areas of the state and changes in the political economy and strategic relations of today's mainland China which the journal began to explore in the first issue in April.

Before ending this foreword, we would like to thank all the contributing authors and the anonymous reviewers for their invaluable efforts in making the publication of the three issues of this inaugural volume possible. We are also grateful to Mr Zhang Yemo (張夜墨) and Mr Chang Le (常樂) for their crucial assistance in proof-reading, and to both Miss Fiona Gill and Miss Chien-yi Wu (吳千宜), who took over from Fiona during the preparation of the August issue, for the journal's website construction and maintenance. The responsibility for any errors and inadequacies that remain in these issues of this inaugural volume is of course fully mine.

*Dr Emile Kok-Kheng Yeoh*  
*Chief Editor*

Contemporary Chinese Political Economy and  
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2010 – Vol. 5, 2014), and is currently a member of the international editorial committee of several journals in Asia and Latin America. His latest research projects include the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education/University of Malaya High-Impact Research (HIR) Grant project “The China Model: Implications of the contemporary rise of China” (2013-2016, principal investigator) at the Department of Administrative Studies and Politics, Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya; Suntory Foundation/University of Tokyo international research grant project “Beyond ‘China threat theory’: Dialogue with China experts on the rise of China” (2014-2015, Malaysian component) and University of Malaya UMRG project “Public sector leadership and performance” (2014-2015, co-researcher). <Website: <http://emileyeo5.wix.com/emileyeoh> / Email: [yeohkk@um.edu.my](mailto:yeohkk@um.edu.my), [emileyeo@gmail.com](mailto:emileyeo@gmail.com)>

# Articles

