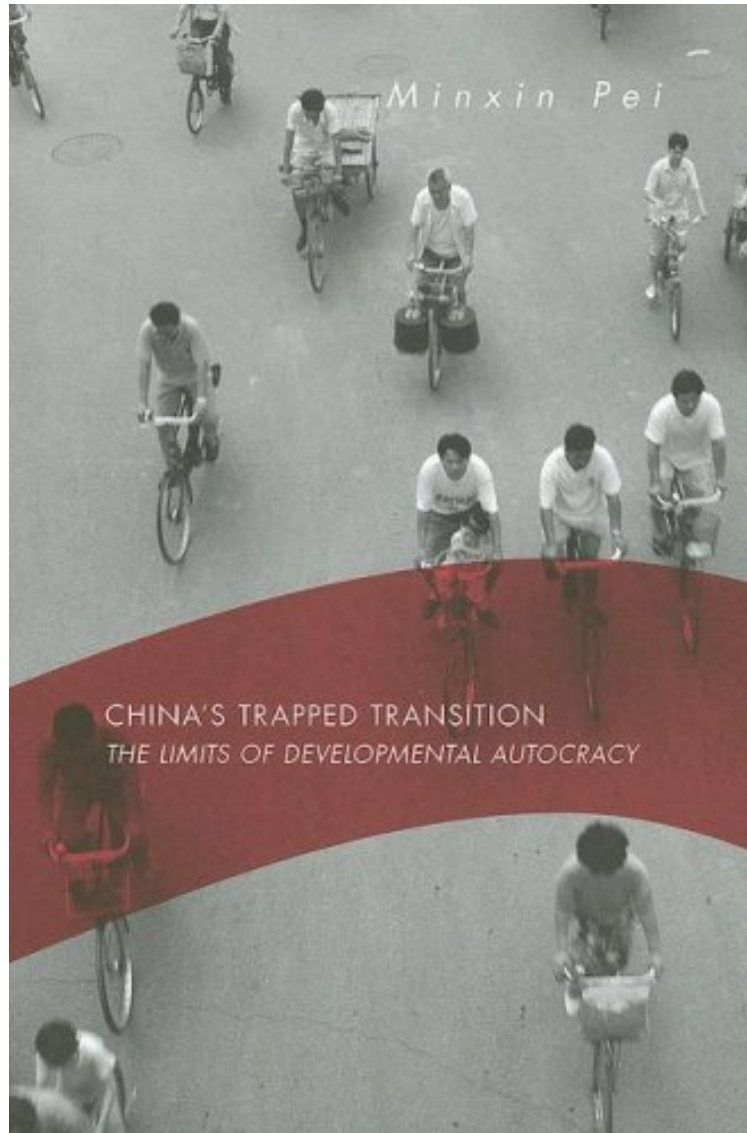


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Chinarsquo;s Trapped Transition

Minxin PEI

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Minxin PEI : Chinarsquo;s Trapped Transition before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Chinarsquo;s Trapped Transition:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Account of Economic Blocks to Democracy But Fails to Sufficiently Question Underlying Theory or Current ContextBy KatzThis book is carefully researched and benefits by the authors access and ongoing monitoring of Chinese sources. He's able to capture nuance that others have missed. It's a particularly important work since it also addresses and is even caught up in a thread in international development literature that predicts that growth in a nation's wealth and in related differentiation of labor and interest groups will lead to democracy. A major thesis of the book is that this isn't happening in China because CPC regime stability

requires side payments to various corrupt and well placed elites to remain in power AND that a major concern of the CPC is to maintain a monopoly of power. This is certainly important and well documented but doesn't really do enough to question the veracity of the core theory. In fact it's odd that after generations of U.S. policy failures predicated on a link between foreign aid, FDI, wealth generation and democracy that a major scholar would still have faith in this underlying thesis. It could be that U.S. post WW II successes in the democratization of Japan and Germany have framed our thinking but counter examples from Vietnam through Iraq and a rich literature on the various and unique paths to democracy even among the oldest democracies should prevent facile assumptions. Other criticisms of Minxin Pei's otherwise excellent work should also be seen in light of its 2009 publication date. It was written before Xi Jinping assumed the office of General Secretary and publicly sought reforms of some of the practices at issue. One might even assume that he or his staff read Pei's work since he's targeting both the evils identified and some of the processes that support them. It remains destabilizing that so much of China's newfound wealth remains on eastern coastal provinces at the expense of the rest of the country. Since political stability is prized by an elite that saw the alternative in the Great Leap and GPCR Xi has supporters in his quest to wrest power from those interests whose greed works against ongoing stability. However, the quest for stability is also a block to those who would promote democracy even if corruption and rent seekers cease to block the way. Chinese elites I've met are democracy phobic in a manner not dissimilar to American Federalists watching the excesses of the French Revolution while favoring constitutional limitations like the Electoral College and Supreme Court. This is another reason we will not be witnessing a democratic transition in China anytime soon.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Autocracy and anarchy
By Gervais Lavoie
Pei did an excellent work. He supports his argumentation with elaborate research including facts and numbers. The recent elimination of Bo Xilai tends to confirm that China is effectively trapped. And as of now, most of the problems identified by Pei do not seem to disappear but to be more and more accurate.

5 of 12 people found the following review helpful. highly intelligent in-depth analysis
By westwind
I am not a political scientist, economist or expert on China, and I found this book quite clear and understandable. It is a highly intelligent, in-depth and convincing analysis of China as a dysfunctional, 'predatory' state. It is highly unlikely it will evolve in positive directions of increasing democracy. While it may collapse, the future may instead be that of a corrupt, stagnating failed state which exports its problems to the rest of the world - failure to control drugs, arms sales to dangerous regimes, aids, illegal immigration, etc etc. An important antidote to all the self-serving business propaganda on China's economic miracle.

In a book sure to provoke debate, Minxin Pei examines the sustainability of the Chinese Communist Party's reform strategy--pursuing pro-market economic policies under one-party rule. Combining powerful insights with empirical research, *China's Trapped Transition* offers a provocative assessment of China's future as a great power.