
CHINA

Over the course of the past twenty years, China has carried out the largest population control policy in global history. China, the world's most populous country, has endeavored to slow down its population growth for the sake of a better economy and a better standard of living for its people. Its leaders firmly believe, as most economists do, that in order to make significant economic advances, population growth must be held in check. It is not, however, the rationale of family planning that is controversial, but rather its methodology of enforcement. In "Using Many Knives: Regionalism and the Codification of China's Family Planning Policy," Ben Kostrzewa explores the diverging trends of regionalism and national codification.

In "The Power of Cuteness: Female Infantilization in Urban Taiwan," Tzu-I Chuang explores the semantic richness and ambiguity of the very concept of cuteness. What does it mean to be cute, or *ke'ai*, in Mandarin Chinese? Are there different ways of being cute? How is cuteness understood by actors and perceived by observers? The word *ke'ai* incorporates a multitude of meaning and is presently going through a process of redefinition in Taiwan. Chuang traces the shifting social meaning of cuteness and posits it in relation to entrenched gender ideology and the prospect of emancipation.

JAPAN

In "The Politics of Restructuring NTT: Historically Rooted Trajectories from the Actors, Institutions and Interests," Kenji Kushida examines the development of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone in terms of the institutions and market dynamics that drive actors to make political bargains which, in turn, shape the institutional landscape for the next set of interactions between actors. He concludes that the development of the telecommunications sector is highly path-dependent and argues that any understanding of the telecommunications sector, both within and across countries, must be predicated on an analysis of the political dynamics which mediate economic forces.

Jacob Brown dissects the contemporary Japanese political debate over constitutional revision and the nation's military role in the world in "Catalysts, Choices and Cooperation: Japanese Military normalization and the US-Japan Alliance in the 21st Century." Analyzing a combination of external factors, from the end of the Cold War to the American engagements in Afghanistan and Iraq post-9/11, and internal factors, including changes in the balance of power among differing political factions and in social attitudes as a new generation voices an opinion of its own, Brown finds the US-Japan alliance is in no danger of withering away anytime soon, though constitutional changes are on the horizon.

KOREA

The rise of South Korea and Taiwan to global dominance in semiconductor manufacturing has confusingly been attributed to both state-led and market-led models of technological development. In his "A New Context for Technological Development: Reconsidering South Korea and Taiwan's Semiconductor Success through Market Space and Business Organization," Daniel Jung maintains that both arguments ultimately fail to address the dynamics of market space and miss crucial differences between the semiconductor industry in South Korea and Taiwan. In studying these, Jung finds room for a more nuanced narrative of technological development that emphasizes local firms - not the government or multinationals - as the primary protagonists.

