Scott Kennedy, beyond the Middle Kingdom: comparative perspective on China's capitalist transformation

**(Stanford University Press, 2011), 280 p. \$58.50 hardback, \$14.95
paperback**

Yi Feng

Published online: 30 October 2014

© Journal of Chinese Political Science/Association of Chinese Political Studies 2014

Despite its comparatively short length, this edited volume is a serious academic work with several distinct strengths. First, it adopts a comparative framework of analysis. For instance, on the subject of regulation, China is compared to France, Japan, and Brazil; on development strategies, with East Asian countries; on automobile production, with Russia; on welfare, with Brazil, India, and Indonesia; on business-government relations, with India, Japan and Russia; and on bank acquisitions, with Mexico and Korea. This approach facilitates comparing China with other developing countries in its analysis of the background, evolution, and progress of China's transformation into a capitalist and market economy. Through comparison, China's unique aspects are highlighted against its commonalities with other developing countries.

Second, the subjects of the book are well-chosen to reflect major current issues in China's economic model and practices, such as regulation, development strategy, the automobile sector, welfare policy, and business-government relations. The book ends with a conclusion that echoes the introductory chapter by stressing the importance of a comparative approach in studying China. Third, the chapters by various authors are coherently and organically connected, giving this volume of nine chapters (by eight authors) the impressions of a work well-executed under a shared plan. Cross-references within the chapters are well-placed, which makes it easy to read this edited volume; despite some distinct individual styles. This excellent volume is suitable for a graduate seminar on China's economy or political economy and for an upper-division undergraduate class on the similar subject.

Yi Feng is the Luther Lee Jr. Memorial Chair in Government at Claremont Graduate University. His areas of research and teaching interests include international relations, international political economy, and Chinese political economy..

Y. Feng (✉)

Claremont Graduate University, 150 East 10th Street, Claremont, CA 91711, USA
e-mail: dr_feng@yahoo.com