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*The Trans-Pacific Partnership, China and India* makes a new and useful contribution to a very important academic and policy question in the Asia-Pacific today. It will only become more important in the years to come as China and India's economic and political influence grow and as the TPP and RCEP negotiations advance (or not).

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***Border Economies in the Greater Mekong Subregion.*** Edited by Masami Ishida. Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, IDE-JETRO Series, 2013. Pp. 362.

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Over the past ten years, studies on the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) have become increasingly numerous. The extent of this literature reflects the dynamism of current regional integration processes in continental Southeast Asia where commercial exchanges were first interrupted by decades of war, then limited by competition between rival political systems. In many of these works, the GMS, which includes Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and the southern provinces of China (Yunnan and Guangxi), is studied using either: an approach on a national scale, evaluating in particular the different policies adopted by each state to integrate the GMS; or a transnational approach, studying, for example, the reorganization of movements of migrants, transport or investments on a subregional scale. This volume's contribution is that it fills a gap in the existing literature by analysing the impact of the development of the GMS on local spaces. It also directly evaluates the reasons behind the creation of economic corridors, which, according to the United Nations, should favour the development of peripheral areas rather than the main structural nodes.

This volume is divided into three parts and contains a great wealth of information on the local territories studied. The first part defines the directions of research and analysis structuring the case studies that are examined in the second part. The final part is a synthesis of the information contributed by the studies presented in Chapters 3 through 10.

The prologue concisely describes the main stages of the establishment of the GMS. Following this, it then identifies two main development possibilities for border economic zones: the cross-border movement of people and goods; and the development of border industries, border trade, tourism and casinos. This volume aims to measure and evaluate the reality of different economic activities conducted in these border areas. Chapter 2 cuts to the heart of cross-border movements as it deals with the Cross-Border Transport Agreement (CBTA), an agreement signed by the six countries of the GMS to simplify procedures when vehicles cross each border. Several studies emphasize that border crossings are the weakest links in the supply chains of economic corridors. After the 1997–98 Asian Financial Crisis (AFC), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) made the reconstruction of transport infrastructure (“hard infrastructure”) conditional on the ratification of free trade agreements (“soft infrastructure”) between the parties concerned. Despite this, Ishida emphasizes in this chapter that border-crossing difficulties continue to persist. Chapter 2 is valuable also because it provides a detailed description of the stages that must be completed before the CBTA can be said to have been implemented in its entirety — all of the chapters featured in the second half of the volume use Ishida's classification to evaluate the progress of the implementation of the CBTA in each of the border areas studied.

The second part of the volume contains eight chapters studying no less than fifteen border areas, twelve of which are located on a GMS economic corridor. The two main qualities of these chapters are that they all rely on extremely detailed, concrete knowledge of the border areas, and that they all use the same method of analysis — proof of real

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collaborative work instead of a mere juxtaposition of articles. After describing the main characteristics of the border studied, each chapter evaluates the quality and possibilities of crossing the border, by car, by bus or on foot, then analyses the economic activities that result directly from the presence of a border. Furthermore, most of the chapters have adopted a comparative approach, and study the economic development of several border areas in parallel. These are either situated on each side of the same border but in two different countries, or, alternatively, they might include two border cities on the same side of a border but located several kilometres from each other.

This systematic approach, and the numerous comparisons, make it possible to attempt to identify factors that either favour or penalize the economic development of border areas, and explain the frequent asymmetries in economic growth on either side of the border.

In the last part of the volume, Ishida provides a synthesis of the main conclusions of each chapter in a series of illuminating comparative tables. This overall view enables the author to define a typology of these border areas and evaluate the potential economic development for each type. Two other important points are emphasized in this conclusion. The first highlights that the policies of middle-income countries/regions and those of Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar are completely different with regard to their objectives in developing border areas. Although the former group aims to stimulate the growth of peripheral areas in order to reduce economic inequalities within the countries concerned, the latter group aims mainly to take advantage of the proximity of their rich neighbours to favour national economic growth and reduce poverty levels.

The second point concerns the sustainability of development in these border areas. In both the prologue (p. 19) and the conclusion, Ishida writes that he is convinced of the temporary nature of economic growth in border areas due to the ongoing process of regional economic

integration within ASEAN. However, this very arguable assertion deserves a more thorough analysis, which it does not receive in the volume. Even in Europe, development zones specific to borders persist. Although the border is no longer a barrier, it remains a separation between two political systems and is also a line of economic discontinuity. Each of these case studies would certainly have benefited from a more theoretical approach to the concept of the border. At no point is the term “border economic zone” really defined, and it is difficult to know, for example, whether it includes the border city. This is an important consideration because economic activities generated by the border are commonly isolated from the rest of the spatial planning of the border city. This approach probably also explains why the policies of local authorities are not accounted for, even though their economic development strategies tend to be radically different from those of the central authority and they have gained greater autonomy since the implementation of a decentralization process in most Southeast Asian countries.

In conclusion, despite a few minor shortcomings, this volume is a valuable tool for comparing the different border areas in the GMS. In particular, it enables us to evaluate the links, as suggested by the ADB, between economic corridors and economic development. It appears that although the creation of these transport routes almost always favours the growth of the urban centres located at the end of a route, such as Bangkok or Kunming, their impact on the economic growth of intermediate areas, such as those near borders is not automatic.

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