

Chinas Grenzen mit Birma und der Sowjetunion — Volkerrechtliche Theorie und Praxis der Volksrepublik China. By Michael Strupp. Hamburg: Institut fur Asienkunde, 1987. 2nd and enlarged edition. 559pp. with a summary in English, index and maps. DM 39.

Strupp's very detailed presentation of China's frontier disputes with Burma and the Soviet Union is based on intensive research into the legal aspects and the historical development of the respective positions. Heavily annotated and with Strupp's command of Chinese and Russian, in addition to sources in West European languages, it has all the ingredients for being a standard contribution to this topic.

Less than a third of the book deals with the Chinese–Burmese frontier dispute, which finally found a negotiated solution in 1960/61. Strupp shows in his presentation how the People's Republic handled and solved a highly complicated conflict which had its roots in the colonial past and in traditional Chinese ideas about state territory and frontiers. The greater part of the analysis concentrates on the still unsolved frontier conflicts with the Soviet Union, which had attracted world-wide attention in the past because of their explosive potential. Nevertheless, Strupp's interest goes beyond these disputes; he uses them as case studies for an investigation into the theory and practice of international law in the People's Republic. This is of special importance as detailed studies about such problems have not been fostered before because of China's self-imposed isolation during the Cultural Revolution when there was a very serious lack of documented publications.

Strupp comes to the conclusion that, though the Chinese theory and practice of international law have always been influenced by developments in the political sphere, this has happened to a lesser degree in real negotiations than expected by those who interpret China's foreign policy primarily in terms of a revolutionary strategy. China has behaved quite flexibly and pragmatically, especially in those cases where the bilateral relations — for example, with Burma — were not complicated by any other more serious discord. However, the frontier disputes with the Soviet Union have proven to be much more intractable because of the ideological confrontation that has poisoned the atmosphere between the two countries for so many years.

The evident factual knowledge as well as the balanced and readable presentation make Strupp's book — a dissertation in International Law which was completed in 1977 and published for the first time in 1978 — a worthwhile acquisition for those with a professional interest in this

topic. The second edition is identical with the first up to page 472, and technical reasons have made it impossible to change the obsolete Wade-Giles transliteration system to the Pinyin system which has gained wider acceptance in recent years. A chapter (42 pages) about recent developments in China's frontier relations with the Soviet Union and Burma, a bibliography, an index, better quality maps and a short English summary have been added in the second edition, but it is nevertheless questionable whether these improvements make it worthwhile for those who own the first to buy the second edition.

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***"How the Dominoes Fell" Southeast Asia in Perspective.* By John H. Esterline and Mae H. Esterline. Boston: Hamilton Press, 1986. 429pp. ISBN 0-8191-5111-4. US\$19.95.**

The dominoes which John and Mae Esterline refer to are not the countries of Southeast Asia falling like dominoes to communism, which Eisenhower and Kennedy feared. The falling dominoes are societal dominoes — human values, human rights and economic development. According to the Esterlines, these dominoes are falling in the countries of Southeast Asia because of the inability of these countries to break away from the crushing weight of their old traditions and political cultures.

In successive chapters, the authors review the pre-colonial and colonial history of each of the nine countries which make up Southeast Asia to identify how their past continues to influence the present. This identification is neatly and succinctly presented as a series of "political indicators". For example, one "political indicator" the authors identified for Malaysia is that "the powerful political offices of *bendahara* and *yang di pertuan muda*, which developed early, enabled their occupants to rule while the Sultans reigned, a tradition that prepared the sultans for their roles in the British residency system."

The major part of each of the chapters on the individual countries, however, evaluates trends in their political development up to 1985, and measures their economic and social development. The overall assessment which the authors arrive at is that "disturbed over minimal economic