

(p. 7), there are barely any references to publications in the latter two disciplines. Neither are we told whether the behaviour of Chinese actors in clean energy cooperation bears any similarities to other arenas documented in the now-voluminous literature on “Global China.” Furthermore, unlike Lewis’s previous book, *Green Innovation in China: China’s Wind Power Industry and the Global Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy* (Columbia University Press, 2013), *Cooperating for the Climate* is not clear on what is unique about China’s model of international technological partnership.

The points left unaddressed by the book are only testament to its value in opening promising avenues for future scholarship. As a pioneering study of China’s bilateral technological collaborations, *Cooperating for the Climate* will be a major contribution to debates on how to balance competition and collaboration with China amid geopolitical rivalry. Understanding the specificities and potential of China’s clean energy partnerships will be particularly important for countries in the Global South, which, in the face of growing economic nationalism, risk falling further behind in the acquisition of the key technological capabilities needed for a low-carbon future.

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Australia’s China Odyssey: From Euphoria to Fear

James Curran. Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2022. 305 pp, \$34.99 (pbk), ISBN 9781742237152

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As the title suggests, this book provides an overview of the tortuous path of Australian thinking on China over time. It traces the historical evolution of Australian attitudes towards the People’s Republic of China (PRC) from the end of the Second World War to the present era, with particular focus on the period since 1972, when the two countries established diplomatic relations. Apart from press reports, the book draws on memoirs, declassified government documents and Wikileaks revelations to shed light on Australian thinking about China, especially among Canberra’s policy elite.

The author’s main line of argument is hard to ascertain, other than the banal truism that the present cannot be fully understood without reference to the past. But the banality is partly offset by the author’s artful way of presenting the truism. In Curran’s own words, “it is the central argument of this book that the shock of the recent deterioration in relations since 2017 can only be fully understood and appreciated against the hopes, dreams and aspirations that successive Australian governments held for ties with Beijing from the early 1970s, from the odyssey the relationship has traversed since that moment of diplomatic opening” (xx). Indeed, as a historian, Curran is focused on furnishing a historical account rather than mounting an argument or a critique. Unlike other book-length studies in the field that document historical events and policy behaviour, Curran is more interested in uncovering the thinking behind such events and behaviour. In doing so, he has been able to utilize a variety of sources that had not been available to earlier authors.

For instance, many key participants in Australia’s China relationship have published memoirs in recent years, including former prime ministers and former ambassadors, contributing their recollections and perspectives to the public debates. Former prime minister Kevin Rudd and former ambassadors Stephen FitzGerald and Geoff Raby, in particular, have written and spoken

voluminously on their experiences with China. The case of Stephen FitzGerald is especially useful because his historical recollections as Australia's first ambassador to China in 1973–1976 have the added benefit of being backed up by internal government documents that have since been released into the public domain.

These documents have been cited in Curran's book to illustrate various points in the narrative, such as a despatch sent in May 1976 by Ambassador FitzGerald to Foreign Minister Andrew Peacock that cautioned against the tendency of setting high goals for the China relationship (pp. 42–43).

Wikileaks revelations have also been used wherever possible by Curran to demonstrate the close interest taken by Washington in Canberra's China thinking. Apart from the now well-known conversation of March 2009 between Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, when Rudd counselled a "brutal realist" approach to Beijing by "preparing to deploy force if everything goes wrong," Wikileaks is also cited by Curran to reveal how the American Embassy in Canberra interpreted the Rudd government's defence white paper that regarded China, though without explicitly naming it, as "Australia's primary regional threat" (pp. 159–160).

Indeed, Curran's book devotes more space than earlier works on Australia–China relations to the US factor in Canberra's China thinking. While Canberra has often been troubled by a possible lack of full commitment by the United States to Australia's defence, Washington has also been anxious from time to time about the Antipodean nation's loyalty to the American cause against China. For example, as recounted by Curran, around the time of President Barack Obama's visit to Australia in 2011, a US congressman expressed misgivings about the possibility of "another Germany in Australia," namely, a "country that's a defence ally of ours but has become dependent on China for its trade" (p. 180).

This expanded coverage of the US role in Australia's China relationship is a strength of Curran's book, but also its weakness, especially for the readership of a Chinese-studies journal, like *The China Quarterly*, that is keen to learn more about China's motivations in conducting its international relations. In fact, Curran's book has nothing to say on China except taking Beijing's international behaviour as a given. The book would resonate more with readers of publications on Australian studies and, perhaps, US studies than with those of *The China Quarterly*.

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Social Credit: The Warring States of China's Emerging Data Empire

Vincent Brussee. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023. 204 pp. €39.99 (pbk). ISBN 9789819921898

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The debate about social credit started on uneven factual grounds. Some portrayed the social credit system (SCS) as an emerging Orwellian surveillance technology, complete with score-based punishments for citizens, others held against such assertions, arguing that social credit is a strategy to enhance financial credit reporting and law enforcement. A basic account of the fundamentals of the SCS, as simple as it sounds, was missing in the debate, and is most comprehensively provided by Vincent Brussee's book. As he unpacks the SCS, the meaning of the subtitle *The Warring States*