

Perhaps the best candidate for political reforms was Wenling, which became famous for its experimentation with participatory budgeting. Wenling's reforms brought together the major stakeholders, including an elite group of wealthy entrepreneurs, open-minded local leaders, and even the local Organizational Bureau. Yet even in this exceptional case of interest alignment, Fewsmith sees no sign of "inner-party democracy." Wenling's personnel decisions remain firmly in the hands of the Party elite, and participatory budgeting can only be labeled "consultative authoritarianism."

Abundant evidence suggests that the Party is increasingly weary of growing social tensions such as mass protests and rampant corruption. Such disruptions could be mitigated by more-inclusive political reforms, but the Party's current tool of choice appear to be a classic carrot-and-stick combination of social services and policing. As tensions mount and as communication technologies become ever-more-sophisticated, these means of control have become extremely costly and often ineffective, putting even further pressures on the state to maintain high levels of economic growth and calling into question its authority and legitimacy. At the same time, the Party continues to make efforts to blur the lines between state and society, effectively putting political reforms further into the future. By clearly presenting both the logic and the limits of political reforms in China, Fewsmith's thoughtful research will force scholars to rethink the causal linkages between economic growth and political liberalization.

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3.11: Disaster and Change in Japan by Richard J. Samuels. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2013. 296 pp. \$29.95.

In Japan, "3.11" was quickly declared a galvanizing crisis. The compound disaster of earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear meltdown, many held, would mark an indelible dividing line, reshape the country's political institutions, and define its historical epoch. Has that happened? No comprehensive answer is possible, but Richard Samuels provides an expert interim report on how Japan's "political entrepreneurs," "elites," and "chattering classes" (pp. x-xi), interpreted 3.11 and sought to translate its ostensible lessons into national policy. While this is not a work of ground-level reportage or a study of regional reconstruction, it is clearly the product of a deep sympathy for the disaster's immediate victims and Japan as a whole.

Samuels begins by describing the institutional responses that followed when "sudden devastation" was added to the "slow devastation" (p. x) wrought

by years of economic downturn. Next, he presents his own analytical framework, and moves on to review the consequences of four of Japan's major earthquakes in modern times, other major disasters elsewhere, and the mixed evidence for the transformative potential of "disaster diplomacy."

Samuels focuses on three major policy areas: security, energy, and local government. Japan's post-disaster discourse, he argues, was structured around four motifs: change itself; the quality (or lack) of leadership; community; and risk or vulnerability. The result was the generation by stakeholders of a set of three "prescriptive narratives" (p. 26) deployed to justify or gain support for the particular course to be taken. The first called for the national leadership to "put it in gear"—to accelerate energetically out of dysfunction and stasis in a new direction. The second urged it to "stay the course," while the third sought to leap "back to the future" of a simpler, innocent Japan. The real-time interplay of policy areas, rhetorical tropes, and course prescriptions makes for a complex account, but it does help us to understand both the obvious and non-obvious consequences of a no-less-complex event.

Overall, Samuels finds, advocates of "staying the course" have predominated: their argument that 3.11 was a "black swan," a case of the "unimaginable" (p. 123), has been sufficiently convincing that "change," albeit sometimes of considerable significance, has tended to be incremental. In the security domain, "putting it in gear" would break (too far?) to the right, with an expanded military engaging actual enemies. So even though Japan's Self-Defense Forces and the U.S.–Japan security alliance emerged from 3.11 with historically high levels of public support, this has not yet translated into higher budgets, let alone constitutional change. (Samuels was writing, however, prior to the July 2013 election that returned Abe Shinz and his party to power.) In energy matters, by contrast, "putting it in gear" would tend left, away from the collusive "nuclear village" (p. 118) formed by the Tokyo Electric Power Company and its government allies and toward renewable energy and local control. Hopes for such change remain very strong, but at the national level, they have not materialized. On the other hand, in local governance (which can tie more readily into energy than security policy), Samuels recognizes longstanding trends toward "horizontal solidarity" (p. 196) and political creativity, so that "staying the course" means continuing dynamism. Here, perhaps, and in the activities of civil society at many levels, is evidence of a real impetus toward greater transparency and democratic participation, toward a revival that would incorporate elements of his otherwise noncompetitive "simple life" narrative. Overall, as Samuels puts it, even after 3.11, "normal politics never gave way to crisis politics" (p. 199). Surely the point is not to hope

for the next “unimaginable” crisis, but to redefine “normal” while there is still time.

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Learning to Forget: US Army Counterinsurgency Doctrine and Practice from Vietnam to Iraq by David Fitzgerald. Palo Alto, CA, Stanford University Press, 2013. 304 pp. \$45.00.

The Vietnam War has cast a long and enduring shadow over the U.S. Army. In this study of how the U.S. Army conceptualized the defeat in Vietnam and then reimagined counterinsurgency doctrine in later decades, David Fitzgerald has unpacked the intellectual framework underpinning the shadow wars of the 1980s and 1990s and the more-recent military ventures in Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite the desire to bury the ghosts of Vietnam, they continue to haunt the American military, with intense and unresolved debates over why the war was lost and what lessons should be drawn from that defeat.

During and after the war in Vietnam, Army officers hotly disputed if improved counterinsurgency methods had any impact on the conflict, and whether the thesis that General Creighton Abrams introduced a “better war” after the 1968 Tet Offensive was merely a chimera that hid a darker reality that the war was unwinnable from the beginning. These arguments remained unresolved, for after its withdrawal from Vietnam, the U.S. Army turned its attention to preparing to fight the Red Army in Europe and eschewed involvement in messy counterinsurgency wars in the Third World. Despite sending advisers to El Salvador to assist in counterinsurgency operations, conducting peacekeeping missions in the Balkans, and executing a plethora of other “low-intensity conflict” missions or “operations other than war,” the Army as an institution refused to embrace any missions other than conventional war fighting against the armed forces of a competitor nation-state. In this vein, the Army became very good at learning how to forget the lessons of its greatest defeat, other than to maintain that the primary lesson was to not get involved in such conflicts in the first place without defined goals, overwhelming force, and a clearly delineated exit strategy.

The intellectual struggle over Vietnam’s historical narrative has significantly affected the course of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the past decade. The conduct of these wars has gravitated among emphases on the killing and capturing of insurgents (without the attendant Vietnam-era body count), the transition of security responsibilities to local security forces, and the