

***Russia's New Ground Forces: Capabilities, Limitations and Implications for International Security* by Igor Sutyagin with Justin Bronk. Royal United Services Institute, 2017, 139 pp.**

Images of Russia's land army invariably bring to mind hordes of unsophisticated but rugged tanks and determined infantry sweeping across the plains of Eastern Europe. Yet, as Igor Sutyagin and Justin Bronk demonstrate in *Russia's New Ground Forces*, this characterization is no longer true for the modern Russian military. Instead, Russia's ground forces are carefully designed to achieve specific strategic goals while maximizing the defense of Russian territory.

Sutyagin and Bronk each bring their unique experiences in the area of Russian military development and strategic goals. Sutyagin, a former researcher for the Institute for US and Canadian Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, spent 11 years in a Russian prison camp for allegedly selling secrets to the British government. He was freed in the same spy swap that sent Sergei Skripal to England and Anna Chapman back to Russia. Bronk—whose personal history is perhaps less dramatic than Sutyagin's—has nonetheless written prolifically on the Russian military, especially its technological and organizational aspects.

This experience is demonstrated in the timely details of Sutyagin and Bronk's work. There are many works describing how, seemingly, the backward and disarmed Russian state suddenly achieved military successes across the globe. Bettina Renz, for example, offers an excellent reference in *Russia's Military Revival*. Sutyagin and Bronk focus on Russia's strategic and political goals and how the organization and arming of Russian ground forces help to achieve them. It is almost trite to point out that Russia's fundamentally defensive and paranoid worldview drives its leaders' assessment of the country's security situation, as has been the case since at least 1945. As Sutyagin and Bronk demonstrate, while Russia certainly feels uneasy about a burgeoning Chinese population on its border, the West remains Russia's greatest perceived threat. Therefore, Russia has chosen a force structure and disposition directly intended to influence Western decision-making and to defend against a potential attack on Russia's European core. This focus has meant creating a smaller, better equipped, and more offensively oriented force.

Sutyagin and Bronk organize their work into three parts, flowing from a description of Russia's strategic and political goals to the geographic distribution of Russian military formations. All three parts first outline the strategic problem Russian leaders need to solve and then how they attempt to do so by reorganizing, redistributing, or reequipping their forces. The first chapter portrays how Russia uses its military to achieve its foreign policy. The second details the post-2008 reforms of Russian land forces. The third chapter demonstrates the geographic distribution and purpose of major Russian organizations. The book ends with a brief set of conclusions, summed up by the saying, "If you want peace too much—you will inevitably get war."

The true genius of Russia's New Ground Forces is its emphasis on force readiness and sustainability. Sutyagin and Bronk do not rehash well-known Russian beliefs or extensively describe the updated order of battle. They resist the temptation to exhaustively detail the new weapons Russian forces are fielding. Instead, they prove true the saying that "professionals talk about logistics." While the book addresses ideology, strategy, and equipment, it also examines how Russian leadership can generate, position, and sustain ground forces.

The most thorough and, arguably, important element of this book is the detailed description of ground force units. The bulk of the second and third chapters comprises a listing of the major field units as well as their primary equipment, subordination, and operational task. Rather than using simple tables, though, the authors present this data in a highly readable format organized around their assessments of each unit's capabilities. Here is where Sutyagin and Bronk discuss current problems afflicting Russia's ground forces: the inability to maintain qualified recruits, acquire advanced electronics, or sustain their level of spending. They show that while Russia's forces are undeniably more capable now than 10 years ago, they are far from unstoppable.

Most remarkable about Sutyagin and Bronk's work, it is sourced exclusively by research in publicly available sources. The authors clearly read Russian professional journals as well as news sources to come to their conclusions. Further, they delineate the limits of their knowledge, indicating when they were unable to discover the unit designator or true strength of an organization. This work should be an exemplar for Air Force personnel attempting to more fully use publicly available information.

Russia's New Ground Forces is an excellent resource for analysts or military personnel responsible for operations in the European Command area of responsibility. It gives a clear overview of Russia's current ground capabilities and how Russia intends to use its forces to achieve its strategic goals. This book is perhaps especially important for Airmen who might not be familiar with Russian ground forces. It is a brisk read whose crisp, well-written pages will only serve to make American defense professionals more successful.

Maj J. Alexander Ippoliti, ANG

***China and India: Asia's Emergent Great Powers* by Chris Ogden. Polity Press, 2017, 224 pp.**

China and India presents an in-depth analysis of two Asian powers whose prominence in the global order is evident. Although much has been written about the regional and international implications of emergent powers, the discourse is largely limited to one or two key dynamics of bilateral relations and their implications. An expert on Asian security, Chris Ogden assesses these two emergent great powers using four prisms: interconnections, perceptions, evolution, and commonality (pp. 11–12). Ogden's analysis includes important implications of the rise of these two Asian giants. The study is "multi-dimensional, multi-relational and interlinked" (p. 10).

The book begins by appraising the status of the two countries as emergent great powers by focusing on their material capabilities, structural centrality, values, and identity as key factors. The first chapter analyzes the main domestic political determinants of both countries. Interestingly, the focus remains on the idea of political legitimacy despite the difference in the form of government. The role of nationalism in the evolution of foreign policy principles is highlighted in conjunction with the role of history and ideology (p. 28). The second chapter addresses strategic cultures and identities wherein history, culture, geography, and self-perception play an important role. While China has a Grand Strategy, most scholars argue that India lacks one. Ogden identifies adaptive strategic thinking in India that fills the void in the absence of a singular Grand Strategy (p. 54). The third chapter analyzes the two countries' military capability, including nuclear prowess, to demonstrate their clear qualification as great powers. China and India have the world's largest and third-largest standing armies, respectively (p. 64). India is the world's second-largest arms importer while China is the fifth-largest exporter of arms. In terms of nuclear capability, it was after India's defeat at the hands of the Chinese in 1962 that the need for a nuclear option emerged (p. 71). The variable of nationalism seems to link the two countries in this pursuit.

The fourth chapter focuses on economic drivers and is filled with statistics that convey two things: China is far ahead of India in terms of economy, and the Indian economy is fast liberalizing to catch up with international capitalism (p. 99). Ogden indicates that the material superiority of China places it on a higher pedestal vis-à-vis India. The fifth chapter focuses on "peripheral relations which seek to convey . . . how the elites of India and China 'conceptualize their states regionally'" (p. 101). India's relations with Pakistan and China's historical tension with Japan form the core of the discussion about how the strategic priorities of the two countries have been evolving. The sixth chapter assesses the multilateral interactions at the global and regional levels. Ogden claims that the rise of India and China has major implications for world order (p. 142). However,

China's inclination to use its economic clout tends to overshadow India's aspirations regionally and globally. The final chapter brings in a discussion of the United States and its undoubted hegemony. Indo-US relations and Sino-US relations have "oscillated between negativity and positivity" (p. 164). However, in the present global context, Sino-US relations appear to have taken a further downturn with President Donald Trump calling out China in harsher terms. Indo-US relations, on the other hand, seem to be following a more positive trajectory partly due to supposedly good personal relations between Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The conclusion evaluates the four prisms previously mentioned. It focuses on the great power ambition of both countries and outlines how the same is evident in the domestic, regional, and global arenas. The discussion shifts again in terms of measuring capabilities. Also included are seven tables highlighting the GDP, population, and military expenditures of India and China relative to other great powers.

Written in 2017, the book lacks some contemporary relevance owing to changes in the policy of China under Xi Jinping since 2018 and the changed power dynamic in India after Modi won the second term in 2019 with a historic mandate. The book set out to support the premise of China and India as two emergent great powers. The variables chosen by Ogden more or less cover all aspects that would be relevant in the domestic, bilateral, regional, multilateral, and international dimensions. There are, however, major indicators that deny India such a status. For instance, India's economic weakness is touched on but not fully explored. A focus on its per capita income and ranking in the global hunger index would defeat the theoretical premise of the book. Furthermore, for India, the regional architecture of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation appears nothing more than a defunct assemblage of mutually suspicious leaders meeting to fulfill formalities. There are major differences between India and China. While both countries are marred by ethnic conflicts, as a one-party state China can maintain its authoritarian legitimacy. India, on the other hand, faces multiple ethnic sub-nationalist challenges—a response to which jeopardizes the balance between rule of law and security. Furthermore, the Indian government faces major criticism whenever it shows highhandedness. The recent abrogation of a constitutional article that provided special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir is a case in point.

That being said, and even if India were not to become a great power in coming decades, the book offers a comprehensive assessment of two Asian giants whose relevance in regional and global politics cannot be ignored due to their sheer size and potential alone. The author presents great power concepts and theories and makes them easy to grasp by using relevant examples. Scholars of international politics will find *China and India* of particular interest.

Abhishek Choudhary
Doctoral Candidate
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University