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# By All Means Necessary: How China's Resource Quest is Changing the World

*Elizabeth Economy, Michael Levi*  
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HOW CHINA'S RESOURCE QUEST  
IS CHANGING THE WORLD

# BY ALL MEANS NECESSARY



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**Elizabeth Economy, Michael Levi : By All Means Necessary: How China's Resource Quest is Changing the World** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised By All Means Necessary: How China's Resource Quest is Changing the World:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A well done summary of China's thirst for resources!By Dan K. EberhartThis book seeks to answer two basic questions, which it does well. (It starts with a brief discussion of Japan's quest for natural resources in the '80's and '90's and the ramifications of that.) The first question is how is China's thirst for resources from abroad changing China. The second question is how is China's same thirst for resources is affecting the world at large.I learned many things from this book. One of them is that China has long avoided UN Security

Council Resolutions against other countries. (In other words, they don't care what a country's political leaders do unlike the US, IMF or World Bank). Another is the extent to which the US supports open sea lanes to protect commerce around the globe. (The book asserts that China simply does not have the capabilities to do this currently.) Finally, there is a fascinating discussion of the geopolitics of water rights. "By All Means Necessary" concludes that China is slowly becoming more trusting of international markets and customs (that are largely US designed or enforced) as it rapidly becomes a more significant consumer of the world's natural resources. At times, the author's could use more statistics to support their conclusions. However, the book covers a lot of ground and does a good job of it. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A well-written, nuanced treatise on China's increasing influence. By Whitney L. Johnson I echo Anne-Marie Slaughter's blurb: "By All Means Necessary is a valuable corrective to the hype that typically accompanies accounts of China's global search for natural resources." I was especially taken by Economy/Levi's scrutiny of how China's quest will impact various stakeholders, whether resource consumers, owners, investors, or heads of state. Policymakers and pundits are suggesting this is must-read book, but for the layperson looking to simply better understand geopolitics, you can't go wrong. Highly recommend. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Highly readable analysis of China's growing demand for resources. By A. Menon The demand for natural resources from China has had huge impacts on the global economy. By All Means Necessary discusses how this demand is affecting global trading relationships as well as political and social impacts. It is very readable and gives a quick introduction to aspects of commodity economics and the real politics associated with scarce resource acquisition. It is not focused on resource pricing as much as it is on the way that global relationships are being affected by the growing need for commodities and how domestic business attitudes are being transplanted as acquisitions go global. By All Means necessary gives a brief background on China and briefly discusses the dynasties who looked abroad for resources. The authors note the priority of being self sufficient for agriculture was due to historical experience with domestic unrest due to famine. They also discuss the modernizing China from the reforms of Deng Xiaoping that catalyzed going from introversion to export led and resource acquisition. The authors detail some of the acquisitions made in the quest for oil and gas and the political spotlight that comes with them. They discuss how developed nations before China all looked to acquire offshore resources when it made sense and China's approach is not unique by historical account. In particular Japan went on a large resource spree in the 70s and 80s. The authors discuss the differences in approach in which some projects are equity while others are long term purchase agreements with subsidized development loans. The authors note that different countries respond differently to China's quest with Mongolia voting with some backlash against foreign ownership. The authors also discuss how after having too much headline exposure from SOE attempted acquisition has led to Chinese SOEs going for minority equity stakes. The authors also spend time on discussing how the resource acquisitions that are made lead to business culture. They discuss how concepts of best business practice are largely absent and the focus on environmental sustainability and labor conditions have often been very low priority. They note that this is the byproduct of business perspective locally not of a race to the bottom of ethics. The authors note that improvement of business practice will go a long way to tempering fears of Chinese acquisitions. The authors discuss patrolling the sea lanes and how the current status quo where the US is the de-facto guarantor of safe shipping lanes is potentially unstable. They also look at arguments around whether China uses politics to improve its domestic economics and remain unconvinced. In particular they look at relationships with Iran and African dictators and conclude that the politics and economics are separately considered. The authors do a good job of putting China's resource demands in historical context. They also try to be even handed in analyzing the benign or aggressive aspects of resource accumulation when looking at the record. The analysis is not particularly in depth but it gives a good easy to understand overview of what has been happening as a consequence of growing demand for commodities, both hard and soft. They present a readable and intuitive discussion of the soft power aspects of resource accumulation by private business and how at some point hard power considerations will float to the surface. Worthwhile read on an important topic.

In the past thirty years, China has transformed from an impoverished country where peasants comprised the largest portion of the populace to an economic power with an expanding middle class and more megacities than anywhere else on earth. This remarkable transformation has required, and will continue to demand, massive quantities of resources. Like every other major power in modern history, China is looking outward to find them. In *By All Means Necessary*, Elizabeth C. Economy and Michael Levi explore the unrivaled expansion of the Chinese economy and the global effects of its meteoric growth. China is now engaged in a far-flung quest, hunting around the world for fuel, ores, water, and land for farming, and deploying whatever it needs in the economic, political, and military spheres to secure the resources it requires. Chinese traders and investors buy commodities, with consequences for economies, people, and the environment around the world. Meanwhile the Chinese military aspires to secure sea lanes, and Chinese diplomats struggle to protect the country's interests abroad. And just as surely as China's pursuit of natural resources is changing the world--restructuring markets, pushing up commodity prices, transforming resource-rich economies through investment and trade--it is also changing China itself. As Chinese corporations increasingly venture abroad, they must navigate various political regimes, participate in international markets, and adopt foreign

standards and practices, which can lead to wide-reaching social and political ramifications at home. Clear, authoritative, and provocative, *By All Means Necessary* is a sweeping account of where China's pursuit of raw materials may take the country in the coming years and what the consequences will be--not just for China, but for the whole world.

"[A] wide-ranging and richly informed look at how the rapid growth of the world's most-populous country is affecting the global economy... According to the authors, in other words, China's supposedly pending economic takeover of the world's resources is more hype than reality. Ms. Economy and Mr. Levi... range from commodity to commodity and sector to sector to show that China's economy and culture are being changed at least as much by the world as China is exerting transformative change upon it." --Howard W. French, *The Wall Street Journal*"Elizabeth Economy and Michael Levi pen the shut-up-and-read-it book of the moment on Asia." --Tom Keene, *Bloomberg Businessweek*"Economy and Levi's findings thread a path between alarmist and complacent views of China's impact on the global economy...The authors present these nuanced views with exemplary clarity and leave the impression that Washington's policies toward Beijing do not require fundamental change." --*Foreign Affairs*"An informed, nuanced and balanced analysis of the many facets of China's eager acquisition of natural gas, ores and other resources, along the way offering much-needed clarity and objectivity beyond the simplicity and hype all too often found in the media and newspaper headlines." --Loh Su Hsing, *Asian of Books*"An excellent volume that sheds light on the domestic sources of Chinese firms' and policymakers' strategies toward China's rising demand for natural resources and offers insight into the implications for the country's external behavior. Their book deserves to be read by all with an interest in the subject." --Llewelyn Hughes, *Asia Policy*"A fascinating look at the multiple dimensions of China's resource quest and the repercussions it has for America's economic, security and diplomatic presence in the world." --Paul Nash, *Diplomatic Courier*"This is the best analysis to date of the three-way economic and security game among China, other countries, and global market forces. With trenchant policy recommendations, it should be read by all those interested in China's impact on the world." --Dennis Blair, former Director of National Intelligence and Commander in Chief, Pacific"By All Means Necessary is a valuable corrective to the hype--both positive and negative-- that typically accompanies accounts of China's global search for natural resources. Economy and Levi combine an understanding of Chinese politics and economic policy with a detailed knowledge of different global markets, from oil to ore. The result is a myth-busting book that offers insights and advice for policymakers, business leaders, and anyone interested in China and the world." --Anne-Marie Slaughter, President, the New America Foundation"Will the 21st century be dominated by China in the same way that the last century was dominated by the United States? Economy and Levi have provided a compelling assessment of how supercharged and commodity-intensive growth in China has led to an unprecedented global buying spree for resources as varied as oil and gas, industrial metals and rare earth minerals, ores and coal, as well as farmland. China's foreign policy and global geopolitics have been influenced in tangible ways, but they argue convincingly that Beijing's motivations are not nefarious and the global system will find ways to curb feared excesses, even as the Middle Kingdom moves to secure the territorial seas around it and build a significant naval presence." --Edward L. Morse, Head of Global Commodities Research, Citigroup"If we are to intelligently manage China's resurgence, there are few areas more deserving of our attention than China's voracious global appetite for natural resources. In this well-written and insightful new study the authors vividly limn how China's restless quest for rejuvenation is simultaneously upsetting the old world order and demanding that the other countries develop new ways of understanding and interacting with it. For anyone wishing to come to terms with this aspect of China's rise, and the policy choices it raises for countries like the US, this is the go-to read." --Orville Schell, Arthur Ross Director, The Center on US-China Relations, Asia SocietyAbout the AuthorElizabeth C. Economy is the C.V. Starr Senior Fellow and Director of Asia Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. An expert on Chinese domestic and foreign policy, her most recent book was *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*. Michael Levi is the David M. Rubenstein Senior Fellow and Director of the Program on Energy Security and Climate Change at Council on Foreign Relations. An expert on the global politics and economics of energy, resources, and the environment, his most recent book was *The Power Surge: Energy, Opportunity, and the Battle for America's Future*.