

---

BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

---

## *Russia's Turn to East and "Asymmetrical" Sino-Russian Relations: History and Facts\**

Ka-ho Wong

*Putin's "Turn to the East" in the Xi Jinping Era*, Edited by Gilbert Rozman and Gaye Christoffersen. London and New York: Routledge, 2023. 246 pp. US\$ 48.95 (Paperback). ISBN: 9781032478210.

Six and a half months after Russia launching "special military operation" in Ukraine in February 2022, President Vladimir Putin attended the Seventh Annual Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok. In his speech, he emphasized that "no matter how much someone might like to isolate Russia, it is impossible to do it, as we have always said so. It is enough just to look at the map."<sup>1</sup> Perceiving itself as a Eurasian great power, Russia has encountered unprecedented sanctions and export controls imposed by Western countries following the Ukraine conflict. Notably, these measures included disconnection from the SWIFT system and imposing price caps on Russian oil. In response to these economic and diplomatic challenges, Moscow has shown a growing interest in pivoting towards the East, seeking to strengthen ties with Asian countries and mitigate its isolation from the West. Russia's reorientation towards Asia is not a new strategy adopted in response to the current Ukraine conflict or even the Crimean crisis. More than a decade ago, President Putin announced a policy of "turning to the East" (поворот на Восток), which

---

**Ka-ho Wong** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Asian and African Studies, Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). Correspondence should be sent to [wong.k.h@my.mgimo.ru](mailto:wong.k.h@my.mgimo.ru)

\* This research was conducted in association with the Center for Comprehensive Chinese Studies and Regional Projects at MGIMO University.