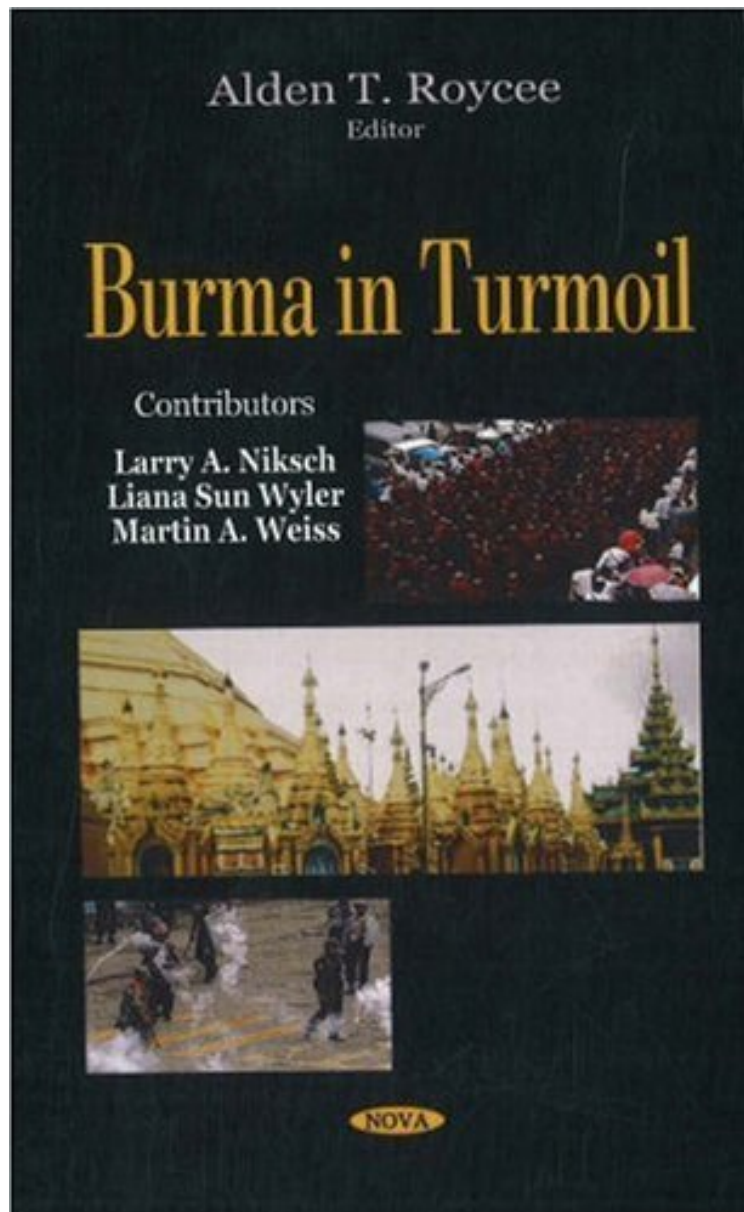


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## Burma in Turmoil

*Alden T. Roycee*

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**Alden T. Roycee : Burma in Turmoil** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Burma in Turmoil:

By the end of September 2007, the Burmese military regime had suppressed with force anti-regime protests that began in late August, escalated in mid- September, and were led by Buddhist monks and pro-democracy activists. This drew new protests from the United States over the regime's abusive human rights record. According to human rights reports by the U.S. State Department and private organisations, Burma's poor record worsened in 2004, 2005, and 2006. These reports have laid out a familiar pattern of government and military abuses of civilians. As in the past, U.S. diplomatic initiatives in September 2007 did not prevent the regime's crackdown. China blocked a U.S.-European Union proposal to have the United Nations Security Council consider imposing sanctions on Burma. However, Burmese military leader Than Shwe proposed to a United Nations envoy that he would meet with opposition leader Aung Sann Suu Kyi if she would cease encouraging confrontation with the government and foreign economic sanctions. The SPDC appears unaffected by sanctions imposed by the United States and other Western nations. Western sanctions are uneven with U.S. sanctions being the heaviest. Burma has been able to expand exports of a variety of commodities, including growing earnings from natural gas production. China and India have signed deals with the SPDC for substantial purchases of natural gas. Burma also reportedly earns between \$1 billion and \$2 billion annually from exports of illegal drugs, heroin and methamphetamines. Most of these earnings go to drug traffickers connected to the Wa and Shan ethnic groups; but Burmese military officials have means to gain a substantial share of these earnings. Burma's fellow members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have grown more critical of the SPDC, but they continue to oppose sanctions. Chinese diplomatic support of the SPDC and military and economic aid is very important: \$2 billion in military aid since the early 1990s, \$200 million annually in economic aid, substantial foreign investment including new investment in natural gas, and a huge influx of Chinese migrants into Burma, mainly traders. China's role is a prime justification for India's 'constructive engagement' policy toward Burma. Burma has re-established diplomatic relations with North Korea amidst reports of growing military co-operation between them. This book presents a background report on Burma and incisive reports on the country and its internal strife and international interactions.