

analysis which anyone interested in the security of the Asia-Pacific region can mine to good effect. The publishers were quite right to convert the journal issue into a book so that it can reach as large an audience as possible. It is a collection that deserves to be widely read.

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Asia in the 21st Century: Evolving Strategic Priorities. By Michael Bellows. Washington DC: National Defense University Press, 1994. 263pp.

This work is, in essence, a documentation of the 1994 Pacific Symposium, sponsored by the National Defense University, Washington D.C. The papers presented are organized into four sections. Part One deals with “Grand Strategy”, Part Two with “Economic Dimensions”, Part Three with “Regional Military Strategy”, and the final part with “Regional Strategic Structures in the 21st Century”.

Three central themes emanate from this collection of papers. The first two are interrelated: *the role of the great powers, and the military strategy of the major players in East Asia*. A key issue in the Asia-Pacific is the strategic role of the United States, which has been the “guarantor” of peace in the region since the end of World War II through a series of bilateral treaties. In the wake of the U.S. military withdrawal from the Philippines, and in the light of the recurrent trade frictions between the United States and Japan, commentators and regional leaders have noted the “uncertainty” over the future of the United States’ security role in the region. While listing ten priority issues and areas of U.S. foreign policy in the region — Japan, Korea, China, ASEAN, Vietnam, Cambodia, APEC, Multilateral Fora, Global Challenges and Democracy, and Human Rights — Ambassador Winston Lord’s discussion of “US Goals in the Asia-Pacific Region” concludes that “it would be a tragic error for America to withdraw from the region or to rest on its oars”. Its location and economic ties with the region render its continued commitment to stability in the region a priority. For leaders in the region, however, the intensity of its commitment is

suspect, given the pressing U.S. domestic priorities and the fact that decision-making on foreign policy during the Clinton Administration has become increasingly difficult because of the present Republican domination of Congress. Regarding U.S. military strategy in the region, Rear Admiral Michael A. McDevitt, then chief of planning for the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Command, sought to redress fears of a U.S. withdrawal by reiterating that the U.S. military presence is the key to regional balance and stability. He reaffirmed the strategy of "Cooperative Engagement" — regional stability in peace time, decisive reaction in crisis, and swift victory in conflict — by relying on forward presence, strong bilateral relationships and regional alliances, focusing on crisis response, and a forward presence of troops in bases in Northeast Asia and "places, not bases" in Southeast Asia. It is clear that the United States cannot and will not keep a constant level of political and military commitment as in the past because of other commitments. In addition, even leaders in the region who want a continued U.S. presence, are not clear about how this presence should be manifested. Singapore has extended the use of its facilities for U.S. naval vessels following the withdrawal from the Philippines, and Brunei has more recently offered its facilities to the U.S. military. It is both natural and logical that amidst the reigning peace, the United States should concentrate on renovating its own house. Furthermore, as it has demonstrated in the 1991 Gulf War, it is very capable of swift, decisive and concerted action when its interests are threatened.

The increasing economic and military power of China is seen as unsettling to many leaders in the region, especially after its recent provocative actions in the Spratly Islands, and its unflinching claim of sovereignty over Taiwan. Xu Xiajun, a research fellow at the Department of Strategic Studies, the Academy of Military Science of China, sought to reassure participants that China intended to continue its central task of economic development and would adhere to its policy of opening to the world, that its defence build-up was for peaceful purposes and it would not seek regional hegemony as some fear, and would pose no threat to any country. Perhaps a so-called Chinese threat, in the absence of the former Soviet threat, is a useful tool around which to galvanize collective action and regionalism. It is true that China had in the past interfered in the internal affairs of the Southeast Asian states. But given its commitment to its own economic growth and its desire for acceptance as an equal in the international community of states, it will not be so rash as to jeopardize this. Senior Colonel Ding Banquan, then a Research Fellow at the Institute of Strategic Studies of the National Defense University, highlights his government's four-pronged

comprehensive security strategy: 1) to manage China's internal affairs and open up further to the outside world, and focus on economic development; 2) to pursue an "independent foreign policy of peace", in particular by "putting aside differences and seeking common ground"; 3) to carry out an "active defense" military strategy, strengthen its self-defence capacity gradually; and 4) to participate actively in Asia-Pacific economic co-operation, and support regional security dialogues as well as consultations.

An additional concern is the spectre of a "dissolution" of the Chinese state similar to what happened to the Soviet Union when millions of Chinese immigrants would flood the world — a daunting prospect to some. As for the possibility of an implosion of the Chinese state, some analysts have argued that doomsday analyses are off the mark, that there is a process of decentralization going on in China which will allow for flexibility in the system and ultimately preserve the Chinese state as it is.

This would be fortunate for Japan, the other major actor in the three-power triangle in the region. It has been a reluctant leader, fumbling its way into a global leadership position which would place it on the U.N. Security Council. Its ambitions of global leadership are thwarted by a slow decision-making process and the lack of any popular vision, but perhaps more realistic, of global leadership for itself. Furthermore, the domestic political turmoil in recent years had ended the thirty-eight-year rule and continuity in policy of the Liberal Democratic Party. Toshiyuki Shikata, a Senior Research Associate at the Institute for International Policy Studies of Japan and former member of the Ground Self-Defence Force, in a similar reassuring manner with other paper presenters at the symposium, reiterated the basic outlines of his country's strategy and security policy which he summarized as follows: comprehensive national security, commitment to the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, maintaining the defensive posture of the Self-Defence Force (SDF), contributing to the United Nations in its security function, and implementing measures for the effective use of the SDF in national crisis management whether it be due to political or natural causes such as earthquakes — which is nothing new.

In a similar vein, other chapters discuss the well-known historical developments, strategies and security concerns of Russia, South Korea, and ASEAN for which the reader should refer to the articles by Serei Blagovolin, President of the Institute for National Security and Strategic Studies, on Russian strategy in the region. In the paper on "ASEAN National Security in the post-Cold War Era", Leszek Buszynski deals with "ASEAN" and not "national" security policies, a reflection of the

success of Southeast Asian regionalism, begun in the early 1960s with ASA and MAPHILINDO. It is customary in discussions of the Asian strategic landscape to point out the “regional” tensions — such as the so-called nuclear weapons “threat” from North Korea, territorial disputes between China and Japan (Senkakus) and the dispute among China and five other Southeast Asian countries over the Spratly Islands. These sources of tension and conflict justify the renovation of armed forces and concurrent increase in military budgets, which have raised concerns — more in Europe and North America — of an arms race in East Asia. It is a good example of intellectuals, consciously or unconsciously, adopting the discourses of states.

The third theme, *economic interdependence and comprehensive security*, features so-called new sources of conflict, subsumed under the heading of economic dimensions to security which have come to the fore paralleling the popularization of notions of regional and global economic interdependence. Robert Manning’s “Challenge of Geoeconomics”, one of the more interesting papers, highlights the “ascendancy of economics (in an increasingly integrated economy) as a determining factor in shaping post-Cold War international relations — what has been called geoeconomics”.

In the Asia-Pacific today, says Manning, the fundamental question is “whether the logic of geoeconomics, the imperatives of an unprecedented pattern of economic interdependence, can supersede the burdens of historic antagonisms and suspicions — the countertrends of fragmentation and ethno-nationalist conflict”. The logic of geoeconomics, he says, leads towards the idea of a new economic, political and security architecture to manage the effects of the Asia-Pacific’s success, share responsibility, expand its prosperity and safeguard its collective security. Fred Bergsten, in the concluding paper, notes that economic issues will increasingly tend to dominate security issues and that the security structures to be developed will reflect this. In the long run, while collective leadership to manage the region’s affairs is the best option, history does not bode well for this prospect. Therefore, he proposes the development of a “fall-back” choice — a true Asia-Pacific Community “in which the economic dimension and the security dimension increasingly work together to find a constructive basis for resolving the bilateral, regional and other problems that our countries will continue to face”. These are, in short, the major points brought out by this book.

As indicated, the book should be read as a documentation of this conference and for this purpose it is a good source. Taken as a series of documents simply reiterating the official positions of the various

governments in the region, it is highly instructive. This is a logical outcome, given the credentials of the authors who were in their governments' service at one point or another, with the exception of two participants who are in research institutions.

There are nevertheless a few minor criticisms. First, the "Asia" in the title is somewhat misleading as it deals essentially with the Asia-Pacific or more precisely East Asia. If it purports to deal with "Asia" then the omission of India is incomprehensible. Given the venue of the symposium, this glaring omission could be misconstrued as an indication of the lack of priority attached by American policy-makers to South Asia. Secondly, it purports to discuss Asia in the twenty-first century whereas the topics cover the state of affairs up to 1994. Finally, the overall utility of the publication would have improved substantially had the author included transcripts of discussions and reactions to papers which might have occurred at the Summit. The papers and the high stature of the participants lead one to conclude that they accept their countries' policies uncritically.

For the reader who is seeking a more critical approach there are major issues which were, understandably, not addressed by the participants. Beyond the regional strategic issues, there are important developments in the region which are having a profound impact upon these societies, such as the development of a civil society in East Asia and the role of non-governmental organizations, as well as political and economic challenges to nascent regionalism. Furthermore, while there is a strong push for regional co-operation through dialogue and institution-building to take advantage of the reigning peace, the discourse on regionalism often glosses over serious security issues emanating from within states, and between states.

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Human Rights and International Relations in the Asia-Pacific Region.
Edited by James T.H. Tang. London: Pinter, 1995. 249 pp.

In the post-Cold War era, human rights have become a major issue in international politics. It has also become one of the primary sources of ideological difference between the West and Asia. This book goes beyond