

BOOK REVIEWS

***Pacific Cooperation: Building Economic and Security Regimes in the Asia-Pacific.* Edited by Andrew Mack and John Ravenhill. St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1994. 269 pp.**

This is an edited collection of essays which derives from a conference held in Canberra, Australia, in July 1993, on economic and political security co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region. This issue has become a major concern amongst policy-makers and academics in the post-Cold War period, given the virtual absence of multilateral co-operation prior to the termination of Cold War tensions and hostilities at the end of the 1980s. Various divisions, governed by political, economic and cultural considerations, accompanied by various bilateral alliances engendered a degree of regional mistrust between 1945 and 1990. The one real success story, ASEAN, was always much more of a conflict resolution mechanism than a key to stimulating economic co-operation.

The growth of East Asian economic power is the central fact in an evolving regionalization of economic and political security regimes in the Asia-Pacific, a fact that this collection dwells on at some length. And the book deals (to some extent comparatively) with the lessons to be learnt from the institutional growth of regional integration at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. Will such co-operation in the economic realm “spill over” into the area of politics? The different essays look closely at the international regime literature and its import for the development of multilateral co-operation.

Miles Kahler’s chapter, “Institution Building in the Pacific” offers a solid account of institutional developments, examining neo-realist and

cultural explanations, but there is nothing new in his arguments. Vinod Aggarwal draws on the well known "hegemonic stability" theory to compare regional efforts in the Asia-Pacific and North America. He asks, "Why are there no strong multilateral institutions in the Asia-Pacific?" And the answer is "because there is no single hegemon" (p. 41). But, clearly, this is only part of the story, and Aggarwal moves beyond single cause explanations to develop the beginnings of a theoretical framework for these developments.

Arguing a more sceptical viewpoint (at least where APEC is concerned), Richard Higgott notes that as a region the "Pacific is a contested concept" and "not a coherent region deserving the hyperbole associated with the oft heralded arrival of the Pacific century" (p. 68). There is no historical evidence of regional consciousness, Higgott asserts, ("no Pacific paradigm") amongst this group of disparate countries and he is sceptical of the commitment to economic and political co-operation.

In Chapter 5, David Rapkin draws on rational choice theory, and specifically "Prisoners' Dilemma" games, to analyse the idea that meaningful co-operation requires real political leadership. This is a complex chapter for readers not versed in such types of analysis but nevertheless a well-researched and thoughtfully written essay.

After this point, the book begins to deal more extensively with the security issues involved. Barry Buzan's chapter on the security order in the post-Cold War period relies heavily (somewhat too heavily) on security complex theory to discuss these problems. Notwithstanding his importance in post-Cold War security thinking, Buzan manages to quote himself nine times throughout his chapter. Again, he is sceptical about the prospects for the region, arguing that dissipated rivalries may re-emerge in the absence of European-style instruments of mediation.

In Chapter 7, Muthiah Alagappa deals with the theoretical aspects of regionalization and provides an overview of the literature. The argument that disadvantaged states in the international system can mitigate their position through collective action at the regional level is a strong one. Alagappa concludes that regionalism is likely to be very effective in preventing conflict at the international level but less likely for containing conflict at state level.

Perhaps the best essay is Joseph Camilleri's piece on the "Asia-Pacific in the Post-Hegemonic World" which manages to link actual developments at the micro level of regional security in the Asia-Pacific within a global framework of a dynamic world economy. In particular, Camilleri notes the strains in the "uneasy marriage between political authoritarianism and market economies" (p. 185). Can the East Asian economic "miracle" be sustained, given the disintegrative tendencies associated with rapid

industrialization? Still, the answers to such questions are unclear. Trevor Findlay, in drawing on lessons from Europe, argues that such models cannot simply be transplanted onto foreign climes and that indigenous institutions need to be developed if such projects are to prove successful. Lastly, several authors (Kerr, Mack and Evans) comment on the “evolving security discourse” emerging in the Asia–Pacific.

Overall, this team of experts have done an admirable job in piecing together the complex theoretical and practical fibres of economic and political co-operation for the region in the 1990s. Edited collections are often a problem in that they tend to be incoherent and inconsistent in thematic terms. Typically, different chapters stray from the central theme and the result is a mish-mash of disparate essays. Mack and Ravenhill are to be congratulated, however, on providing a finely honed, edited collection. Additionally, Stuart Harris provides an excellent summary and conclusion which ties up the loose ends. This volume is an interesting and well thought out attempt to discuss the dynamics of economic and political co-operation in the Asia–Pacific and should be required reading for anyone trying to come to grips with this process.

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***Buying Power: The Political Economy Of Japan's Foreign Aid.* By David Arase. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995. 307 pp.**

David Arase has written a superb and informative book on the Japanese ODA (Official Development Assistance) programme. This is an important topic because Tokyo is the world's largest ODA contributor and, unlike other major powers, has elevated ODA to a central tenet of its foreign policy. As a result of its defeat in World War II and its subsequent abstention from becoming a military power, alms instead of arms have become a key instrument of Japan's foreign policy.

Arase argues that the main thrust of ODA is not simply an outcome of a bureaucratic game of conflict and compromise between the powerful ministries and agencies. It was neither a strategic aid to U.S.-supported front-line states against the former USSR and its proxies during the Cold War era nor a response to international pressure to recycle its trade surplus. His central thesis is that ODA serves to promote Tokyo's commercial