

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

interests and to foster an international economic division of labour in which Japan would be at its apex, with its wealth translated into status and power in the global political economy.

Arase makes a distinction between rhetoric and behaviour in Japanese ODA. Tokyo's apparent intention (*tatema*) during the immediate post-war years was reparations, and in subsequent years the economic development of host countries, humanitarian aid, respect for human rights, promotion of democracy, recycling of trade surplus, and strategic aid to allies of the United States became declaratory policies. The real intention (*hon*ne), however, was to further strengthen the country's economic pre-eminence, especially in Asia. ODA-funded infrastructure projects such as roads, hydroelectricity, and factories benefit Japanese contractors and also facilitate the extraction of natural resources for Japan. Many Japanese factories have relocated to less-developed countries to take advantage of their cheaper costs of production and a less stringent legal regime on environmental pollution. To assuage criticism from the United States and Asian neighbours that Japanese ODA is tied to its economic interest, Tokyo has attempted to offer more and better non-commercial aid, but the essence of Japanese ODA remains securing benefits for home industries and integrating the East and Southeast Asian region into an economic hierarchy headed by Japan.

This is also a nuts and bolts book on ODA. It is packed with information, detail, and case studies especially from Southeast Asia. The first six chapters, chronologically organized from 1945 to 1992, trace the foundation and evolution of ODA. Arase emphasizes the concept of *keizai kyoryoku* (economic co-operation), a euphemistic term for Japan's economic benefit. There are interesting vignettes, such as lectures sponsored by JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) who taught the technique of bribing native officials to obtain ODA loan procurement contracts and the Marcos bribery scandal. Despite demands from opposition parties, the media and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) for a thorough investigation of the Marcos scandal, the ruling party, big business and the ministries colluded and stonewalled demands for greater transparency and accountability.

Chapter 7 traces the selection of ODA projects and its cycle (application, project design, approval, implementation, and operation and evaluation), and reveals that there is often a gap between the real needs of the recipient and the intention to provide opportunities for Japanese business. Problems include bid rigging to favour Japanese companies, and ODA projects are often tied to them even where there are formally open and competitive bidding procedures.

Chapter 8 examines the system of ODA administration which comprises multiple actors: ministries, agencies, client associations, economic

groupings, pro-growth media, academia, and the private sector. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is only one actor in the process; strong representation of economic ministries, agencies and interest groups in the ODA process, and close public-private sector relations ensure the continuity of ODA economism. How is paralysis avoided in ODA policy-making and implementation? Personnel from different ministries, agencies, economic groupings, and intermediary aid organizations are cross-posted to ensure that the interests and views of different organizations are well represented. Complex bureaucratic, public-private collaboration and need for consensus and accommodation result in incrementalism in ODA. Thus, a radical departure from the economic emphasis in ODA is difficult because there is no consensus to do so among the domestic actors.

Chapter 9 and the concluding chapter discuss the limits of ODA as a foreign policy. This approach cannot address the following problems: criticisms that Japan engages only in "cheque book diplomacy" (especially in the wake of the Gulf War), the need for a new regional security framework (especially when U.S. forces have been drastically reduced in Southeast Asia), and suspected nuclear proliferation by North Korea. Although Arase acknowledges certain shortcomings in Tokyo's ODA diplomacy, he tends to exaggerate its successes. He writes: "By any realist standard . . . ODA diplomacy has to be viewed as an imaginative and brilliant success In the 1980s Japan's ODA contributions won it greater recognition in international financial institutions and the UN, as well as at Western economic summit meetings. In Asian regional structures such as ASEAN and Asian (sic) Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Japan became an acknowledged leader. By the 1990s Japan began a credible campaign for a seat on the UN Security Council . . ." (p. 209). However, it is not so apparent that East and Southeast Asian countries have readily accepted Japan as their leader especially when it is unwilling to come to grips honestly with its wartime atrocities. Take, for example, the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea which is claimed by six states. Arase acknowledges that this issue is a potential source of instability in Southeast Asia and also poses a potential problem for Tokyo, especially if the vital sea lanes in that area are disrupted (p. 230). Despite the fact that China and some of the ASEAN countries are among the largest recipients of ODA, Japan has not been accepted as a participant (let alone leader) in quasi-official regional workshops on the Spratlys issue. ODA may, in certain circumstances, succeed in buying power, but true friendship, respect, and matters of the heart cannot be bought.

This book asserts that ODA is primarily an instrument of Japanese economic interests and gives examples where it had not really served the interests of the recipients. However, if it is often against the recipient's

self-interest, why are they so keen to seek Japanese ODA? Is it sought because it benefits the narrow interests of the local élites or because, in some cases, it indeed benefits not only the giver but also the receiver? Despite these reservations, this book is highly recommended for those who are interested in foreign aid and Japanese foreign policy in general.

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“A Strong Showing”: Britain’s Struggle for Power and Influence in South-East Asia 1942–1950. By Rolf Tanner. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994. 299 pp.

Rolf Tanner’s book is the latest volume (the sixtieth) in a series devoted to Colonial and Overseas History that began more than twenty years ago. This manuscript, which was originally written as a doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Professor Rudolf von Albertini, is a bit like the curate’s egg — good in parts. It certainly has some virtues — not the least of them being the broad canvas on which the main regional events are drawn — but its weaknesses (structural, grammatical, technical/editorial) are sufficiently grave or unnecessary as to undermine the good impression created by the former.

In Tanner’s words, this piece of research was conducted in the hope of providing “a comprehensive assessment and synthesis of Britain’s role in South-East Asia between 1942 and 1950” (p. 10). Although this is a grand and welcome scheme in conception, it is less comprehensive and ambitious in practice, particularly since it largely eschews any temptation to trace British military activities in wartime in favour of lavishing attention upon the Churchill administration’s often halting progress towards regional planning for the post-war period. If the author had really intended to avoid the military dimension from the fall of Singapore in February 1942 to the surrender of the Japanese in August 1945, perhaps he would have been better served by restricting the time span of his study exclusively to the post-war period. As it stands, however, the early history is deficient and can hardly do justice to the overriding theme of his work. Moreover, his choice of the term, “A Strong Showing”, for the title of his work looks distinctly odd since it represents more a case of wishful thinking by Sir Esler Denning than an appropriate descriptive motif for the performance of the British in Southeast Asia during the 1942–50 period.