

***UN Peace Operations and Asian Security.* Edited by Mely Caballero-Anthony and Amitav Acharya. London and New York: Routledge, 2005. Hardcover: 146pp.**

The literature on UN peacekeeping has attempted historically to be as holistic and global as possible, to comprehend multiple concepts, and to offer case studies from different continents instead of looking deeper at issues, attitudes, and perspectives from a single region. This volume — the result of co-operation between the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and the UN University in Tokyo — aims exactly at filling this gap, presenting in detail and in-depth the Asian regional peacekeeping experience.

The book both reveals the approaches towards UN peace operations by major Asian countries such as Japan and China, and examines the major UN peace operations in Asia such as Cambodia and East Timor. The value of the book therefore is twofold: to examine Asia both as a donor and as a recipient of UN peace support. It situates its findings on Asian security within a comparative global framework and context, taking as guidelines the tendencies and problems offered by the UN Panel on UN Peace Operations (Brahimi) Report (2000), the UN Secretary-General's Report on "Prevention of Armed Conflict" (2001), the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) Report on "Responsibility to Protect" (2001), and other documents.

The result of this approach is that the book contributes to the regional review of UN peacekeeping by suggesting how Asia can benefit from, and play a larger role in the UN operations. Secondly, the book contributes to the development, both conceptual and practical, of some aspects of Asian security, by elaborating on opportunities and modes of external agents' engagement, and by offering insights on the acceptance of innovations, for example, with the changing nature of "human security". The book therefore is an excellent example of how the global approach can interlink with the regional, and as a result of their interaction, both complement each other.

The methodological strategy is to identify the current trends and challenges for the UN peace operations, to cumulate a gradual UN lessons-learning process, and then to weave these trends and processes into the mosaic of historical, political, and cultural specifics of the different Asian countries and sub-regions. The authors follow this path in a remarkable and coherent way — when aiming at revealing their empirical findings, they constantly bear in mind the task to attach their conclusions to the broader development of the global and multi-layered fabric of UN peacekeeping.

Dipankar Banerjee's chapter on the historical evolution of peacekeeping is both comprehensive and critical. He goes into elaborating seven contemporary peacekeeping challenges, as perceived from Asia, with admirable ability to summarize the essential elements and structure a logical and consistent regional vision. Banerjee concludes by rejecting Michael Glennon's "new interventionism" and reaffirms the Asian tradition of the primacy of the equitable law that must define justice, not the contrary suggestion that the law will follow the powerful, if the cause is just. His final appeal to multilateralism is sound and well articulated.

Kamarulzaman Askandar in a more pragmatic than conceptual way analyses two examples (Aceh and Mindanao) of conflict resolution in Southeast Asia including through efforts to engage ASEAN. He takes the recommendations from the Brahimi and other reports as guidelines to present the opportunities and constraints for UN intervention in Southeast Asia. Askandar realistically accepts that ASEAN may not be able to create its own multinational regional peacekeeping force, and will limit itself to the establishment of a common training centre for the peacekeepers of the regional states. The text is heavily prescriptive (almost every sentence in the conclusion contains the word "need" or "should") with demands and appeals for pro-activity and improvements.

The growing role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in conflict management in Southeast Asia is the main focus of the chapter by See Seng Tan. It looks at the latest institutional developments and searches for the evidential assurance, that the increasing role of NGOs will assist the regional co-operative efforts to de-escalate conflicts. However, the author also expresses uncertainties whether the developments will evolve and lead to a more coordinated and coherent partnership between the NGOs and the military and other components of the peace operations. The chapter offers original survey, conducted among 60 members of various Asian military units and NGOs engaged in the region, and its result suggests mounting attitudinal congruence between the military and civilian units in peace operations. Still the gradual consolidation between the two, as the author cautiously reminds, remains to be proven in the future.

Katsumi Ishizuka analyses the shifts in Japanese policy towards UN peacekeeping since 1991, the determination of Japan to become a political power in the world and a permanent member of the Security Council. The chapter examines competently the legislative developments — the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) law, its five principles and associated amendments, and the Anti-Terrorist Bill.

The author goes through concrete examples of Japanese participation in various UN operations and reveals the problems and lessons. He demands linking the Japanese PKO policy with national interests and exploring the opportunity for Japan to host the Asian regional peacekeeping training centre.

In a similar historical and conceptual manner, Pang Zhongying presents the changing Chinese attitudes to UN peacekeeping, though starting much earlier from the 1970s. The chapter reveals how the Chinese position on peacekeeping has been gradually rationalized through the difficult process of overcoming domestic constraints. However, in contrast with the previous chapter on Japan, which appeals for more attention to national interests, Pang suggests that China's policy should develop from one based on too much focus on *realpolitik* and state-centred attitudes towards a broader "state socialization" with the international community. The author is optimistic that China, by coming to terms with the new global and regional security challenges, and through evaluation of its potential and capacity, can indeed play a larger peacekeeping role and become a factor of stability and regional cooperation in Asia.

Sorpong Peou examines in an innovative and courageous way the UN experience in Cambodia through the prism of "collaborative human security" — as defined by the author, "a normative and empirical commitment to scholarship and humanity based on the understanding that the individual is the main unit of analysis". This concept, the author claims, can be operationalized and based on the strong proposition that states and non-state actors can collaborate effectively when undertaking joint human security activities. Looking at the most complex UN involvement in Cambodia, the author concludes that the collaborative efforts succeeded in a limited way, the actors lacked a strategy to promote human security and were unable to translate their efforts into political influence. The United Nations still made a real, if less than desirable contribution, after spending more than US\$4 billion. However, the country is still a "semi-democracy that remains precarious, in which most Cambodians can hardly make ends meet". This is a serious but justifiable criticism and also an excellent wake-up call: that the lack of atrocities does not automatically mean UN success. The message is that unless "collaborative human security" is taken as a major objective measurement — and Cambodia is a perfect example — very little can be achieved. Although this is a high threshold, its substance cannot be disputed.

In a more pragmatic way Ian Martin and Alexander Mayer-Rieckh present the challenges and the successes of the United Nations' peace

operations in East Timor, describing the successive UN mandates and their implementation, and the role of the Asian countries. More informative than analytical, the chapter concludes that the United Nations' performance was mixed. It recommends strengthening the UN planning capacity, re-focusing the attention from peacekeeping (quick impartial activity from outside) to peacebuilding (long-term sustainable development of local capacity).

Amitav Acharya in the conclusion argues that the two Asian operations — Cambodia and East Timor — confirm the major trends of the changing nature of UN peacekeeping. He suggests that Cambodia can be seen as a model of UN multi-faceted activity, whereas East Timor illustrates the shift from “right to intervene” to “responsibility to protect”. As far as the Asian actors are concerned, Acharya agrees that their potential and resources are significant and can be further mobilized, and the only barrier would be normative — whether to cross the frontier of “humanitarian intervention”. He looks at the Asian governments' responses to the ICISS Report “Responsibility to Protect” and discovers their hesitance to abandon the comfort of the conservative, non-interventionist, and sovereignty-based principle and practice. This may lead to separation of tasks — regional organizations and states engaging in “softer” tasks of peacebuilding and conflict prevention, whereas the hard military intervention and protection remain strictly under UN authority. This book, therefore, is a timely examination of how the contemporary changes and challenges for the UN in general, and for the UN peace operations in particular, affect Asian security.

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