

BOOK REVIEWS

Cooperation, Competition, and the Search for Community: Asia's New Multilateralism

Michael J. Green, and Bates Gill, (eds)
New York: Columbia University Press, 2009

A successful edited volume not only requires that the editors recruit qualified specialists for each chapter but also that those editors integrate the separate analyses so that the book displays a coherence beyond the sum of its individual parts. Michael Green and Bates Gill have succeeded admirably on both dimensions: enlisting renowned Asian country specialists and experts on the various types of cooperation that characterize Asian multilateralism. Moreover, their Introduction illuminates how these types relate to one another. Over the past 45 years, Asia has experienced a plethora of multilateral political, economic, and security arrangements – some long-lived and well-institutionalized (ASEAN) and others formed to deal with a specific situation such as the Core Group that provided aid to those countries devastated by the December 2004 tsunami. There is considerable overlap in states' memberships among these bodies, though they tend to group in a Southeast Asian-led formation centered in ASEAN and a Northeast Asian coterie dealing with North Korea in the Six-Party Talks. An additional transnational dimension may be found in nontraditional security such as infectious diseases,

criminal and terrorist activities, piracy and human trafficking, all of which cross national boundaries and are generally seen by Asian states as susceptible to cooperative action. Traditional, hard security concerns – territorial disputes, historical animosities, and resource conflicts – on the other hand, though discussed in a number of multilateral settings, produce a great deal of rhetoric but very little resolution. Another concern, especially for great powers such as the United States and India, is whether East Asian multilateral groups will be inclusive or exclusive – trans-Pacific or Asia only.

While Asia's New Multilateralism is comprehensive, this review focuses on the chapters dealing with politics and security. Ralph Cossa notes that insofar as there is a pre-eminent provider of security public goods and regional order in Asia, it has been the United States whose navy dominates the seas and whose armed forces regularly exercise with many Asian counterparts – a sort of military multilateralism. As for the best-known regional economic and security organizations – the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), U.S. officials are concerned that the newer ASEAN + 3 and East Asia Summit (EAS) will undermine the formers' stature in which Washington plays a larger role.

Professor Wu Xinbo explains how China's economic prowess helped a number of its neighbors through the 1997–98 financial crisis, generating considerable good will and dissipating Southeast Asians' suspicion of the PRC, replacing it with the image of a good neighbor. Beijing has emphasized economic community building as a prelude to politico-security collaboration, particularly focusing on ASEAN + 3 (APT) as the base for an Asian Monetary Fund in which China would play a major role, ultimately leading to an East Asia Community from which the United States would be excluded. In the last couple of years, however, much of this good will has diminished as China exercises hard power in the South China Sea in support of its Spratly islands claims.

ASEAN members and procedures form the framework for Asia's most prominent multilateral organizations: APEC and the ARF. Inaugurated in 1989 by Japan and Australia, two competing visions vie within APEC: Washington prefers that APEC concentrate on trade liberalization, while Japan and most of the ASEAN members want APEC to promote economic development. After the 9/11 attacks on the United States, APEC took on a security role, initiating under Washington's

direction a Container Security Initiative (CSI) that fostered maritime cargo security in transit – one of the most effective post-9/11 cooperative security ventures, although both Malaysia and China insist that the CSI has diverted APEC from its primary economic mission. Despite its maritime security success, members' interest in APEC waned in the wake of the 1997–98 financial crisis when the forum did nothing to stem the financial meltdowns in the ROK, Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia. In recent years, APEC's primary utility seems to be a venue for heads of state to meet. Economic traction has migrated from APEC to APT.

Comparable with APEC in the economic sphere, Amitav Acharya notes that, in security matters, the ARF also embraces 'soft institutionalism', relying on voluntary compliance for its recommendations. Perhaps the largest security dialogue body in the world, the ARF has particularly disappointed the United States because of its apparent inability to move beyond confidence building to preventive diplomacy. However, in March 2011, the ARF held an extensive disaster relief exercise in Indonesia with some 4,000 participants. Rather than dealing with hard security issues such as the South China Sea islands dispute or the Taiwan Straits – kept off the agenda by China – ARF has devoted its attention to transnational issues, including crime and terrorism, with some success.

The most recent Asian multilateral politico/economic/security forum is the EAS. Initially conceived as a security counterpart to the APT, Indonesia, Japan, and Singapore all pressed to add India, Australia, and New Zealand in order to dilute PRC dominance. In 2011, Russia and the United States have also signed on – Washington finally initialing ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation – a nonaggression pact, but treating it as an executive agreement so that U.S. Senate ratification would not be required. Like APEC, the EAS is a leaders' forum and is expected broadly to discuss the future of Asian regionalism. It is not an action body.

If, as U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates argues, future security challenges will predominantly be asymmetrical insurgencies in weak states as well as natural disasters, other humanitarian needs, counter-terrorism, and counter-piracy, then armed forces will be only one component of an array of skill sets needed to cope. Multilateral collaboration will be essential to meet these challenges. ASEAN is in the process of creating a security community, a socio-economic community, and a human rights body. While these efforts are certainly admirable and if

they were to succeed they would move ASEAN into a whole new level of activity. However, once again it appears the Association's reach exceeds its grasp. An apt illustration is the 2011 border skirmishes between Cambodian and Thai armed forces. As ASEAN's current chair, Indonesian President Yudhoyono tried to mediate – an initial test of the ASEAN Security Community's efficacy. Alas, as of mid-2011, Indonesia's efforts have fallen short. The border war continues, casualties increase, and thousands of refugees have been created on both sides. Hard security conflicts continue to be beyond the ameliorative ability of Asian multilateralism.

Sheldon W. Simon

School of Politics and Global Studies, Arizona State University USA
shells@asu.edu

doi:10.1093/irap/lcr016

Advance Access published on 28 July 2011

Rethinking Japanese Public Opinion and Security: From Pacifism to Realism?

Paul Midford,

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011, 272 pp.

ISBN: 9780804772167 (Cloth US\$ 75.00)

ISBN: 9780804772174 (Paper US\$ 24.95)

Until the Japanese government's decision to participate in the so-called war on terror by first sending maritime self-defense force (SDF) ships to refueling missions in the Indian Ocean in 2001, and then by dispatching ground self-defense force troops to Southern Iraq, the overall view of Japanese security policy had been that it was constrained by article 9 as well as strong public support for perhaps pacifist attitudes. However, these developments and, so it seemed, fundamental changes in Japanese security posture after 9/11 have been taken as evidence that either anti-militarism was waning, or that the Japanese government, particularly under Prime Minister Koizumi, had been successful in convincing the Japanese public that it was the time for a fundamental shift in Japan's