

Die zahlreichen Beiträge von fachkundigen Autoren aus dem GIGA-Institut für Asien-Studien sowie aus anderen Instituten untermauern die wirtschaftliche Bedeutung der Asien-Pazifik-Region für die Weltwirtschaft. Neben Fachartikeln zur regionalen Zusammenarbeit und zum deutschen und europäischen Außenhandel bietet das Wirtschaftshandbuch eine Fülle von Einzelländerdarstellungen aus der Asien-Pazifik-Region sowie ausführliche Statistiken und Informationen zu den Marktzugangsbedingungen von Rödl & Partner. Das Wirtschaftshandbuch verfügt außerdem über hilfreiche Hinweise zur Außenwirtschaftsförderung und enthält einen Adressteil. Alles in allem stellt das Handbuch ein unerlässliches Hilfsmittel für Unternehmen im Asiengeschäft dar.

(Maria Rohrer)

### Malte C. Boecker (ed.): *Asia - Changing the World*

Gütersloh: Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2007, 237 S., EUR 20,00

The Bertelsmann Foundation, much like similar institutions in the US, has a reputation of embracing topical issues, engaging big names in the field, yet treading fairly safe political and intellectual ground and then, given its media power, pushing its products aggressively into the limelight<sup>1</sup>. Prima vista this volume confirms this suspicion. Bertelsmann has discovered Asia (which is good and surely overdue), and has invited big names to a seminar in Salzburg in 2006 to spell out what the rise of the continent means for the rest of the world. While this endeavour is no longer very original, yet the quality and concise intellectual rigor of most of the 16 essays harvested at the seminar manages to dispel one's initial scepticism and makes reading both instructive and pleasurable. Even discounting for the likeliness of occasional ghost writing the

level of contributions is consistently high with an unexpectedly strong share of original thought.

"Asia Rising" – meaning mostly China plus India - is covered in its consequences for Asia's demographic future, her competitive prospects, effects on global power, but also on intra-Asian conflicts, sustainability problems and on relations with Europe, notably on migration patterns and on cultural and intellectual exchanges. Finally there is also a concluding section with programmatic designs of European answers to the Asian challenge: for Europe's competitiveness, her trade policy and for a European Asian strategy in general.

The demographer Carl Haub forecasts Asia's current population of 4 billion grow to 5,3 billion by 2050 – while Africa will double to 2 billion (p. 22), thus dooming herself to live in poverty: "Asia did recognize the dilemma and did react, while Africa largely did not" (p. 23). Like all authors Professor Horst Siebert sees Asia rising further. In 1970 it accounted for 15% of world GDP, in 1996 for 22%. With a gross savings rate of 30%, it by far exceeds the OECD countries average of 20%, thus guaranteeing further sustained growth and modernization. Yet Siebert also enumerates the constraints facing China: Her labour supply cannot expand much further in the long term, resulting in upward pressure on wages and eroding the competitiveness of labour intensive exports. Bottlenecks remain in transport infrastructure and energy supply. Investment in safety at the workplace, in environmental protection and for social security will require higher expenditures. Banks flush with cash from depositors may some day see these supplies drying off and in view of reckless lending policies may face a crisis. Underdeveloped property rights equally do not support long term oriented private real estate and industrial investments. Thus in Siebert's view China's growth will not exceed 6% growth rates during the next decade (p. 38) (and thus be similar to India's rates).

<sup>1</sup> See for instance: Frankfurter Allgemeine 31.10.2007

Although China's overall efforts in innovation, education and R&D are impressive, still on a per capita basis they still lack far behind Japan, Singapore, the US and Europe.

Paul Kennedy predictably draws long lines for his historical cycles. Around 1500 it was the rise of the territorial states in Europe and the beginning of the overseas expansion of Spain, Portugal, France, England and the Netherlands. At 1900 the UK, France and Austria-Hungary were challenged by Germany and Russia, later by the US and Japan. In 1989 the collapse of the Soviet Union gave rise to unipolar US hegemony, which however was wasted in unfocused crusades. At the same time Asia rising meant a gradual tilt of global military, commercial, financial and cultural balances in Asia's favour – barring self-inflicted wars and catastrophes (p. 60). Major risks emanated from the new powers China and India, which promptly engage in the same egoistical nation centred behaviour like their predecessors as world powers, entering an arms race with massive naval build-up and space programmes. Russia under Putin remained a potential danger, being energy rich, militarized and trying to rebuild itself, while demographically imploding (p.60). Europe, however, while not declining – in difference to the US – remained only a very minor player in Asian military and power politics. The Royal Navy, once the world's mightiest, now counted only 23 destroyers and frigates – compared to Japan's 53 – and no aircraft carrier.

Professor Aurel Croissant covers the disruptive potential of inner Asian conflicts, caused essentially by growing developmental imbalances, as large stretches of South and South East Asia are bypassed by the economic boom, causing frictions, discontent and rebellions. "No other region in the world has so many conflicts as Asia" (p. 65). They are however mostly low intensity conflicts, as the post-colonial violence and wars related to state consolidation, regime

and intra elite conflicts declined after 1975. Today it is mostly fundamentalist-religious violence, separatist conflicts in the periphery and inter-communal conflicts, which are sometimes transnationalized due to external or diaspora support, including from Al Qaida. Political instability was evident in both the young democracies and in autocratic regimes, due to their lack of inclusion, ineffective state institutions and insufficient legitimacy in view of unresolved social conflicts generated by unequal economic growth and growing demographic imbalances, including some 60 surplus males in China and India (and to a lesser extent in Pakistan and Korea) by 2020. Asia's security problems are exacerbated by the absence of effective supranational security structures, none of which are likely to develop in the foreseeable future (p. 78).

Demetrios Papadimitriou of the Migration Policy Institute (Washington) forecasts a flood of migrants during the next quarter century, caused by demographics, labour needs and growing networks, and growing at 10% p.a. fairly unchecked as countervailing forces are increasingly rendered ineffective (p. 82). Governments in receiving countries, both in "traditional" destinations for Asian migrants like Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK, but also of Southern and South Eastern Europe which are flooded by idle, unskilled youth from Turkey and North Africa and by the "limitless reservoir" of Sub-Saharan Africa (p. 85) will increasingly formulate selective immigration policies, emphasizing language, professional skills and academic qualifications, thus favouring Indians and Chinese (p. 83). Many of the latter now migrate from depressed Manchuria with the help of regional governments to Eastern Europe (in difference to earlier emigration patterns from SE China). They are not unwelcome, as in Europe East Asian migrants are seen as much less threatening than Islamic immigrants (p. 95).

Eduard Kögel, an urban planner, reviews the settlement patterns of Chinese migrants to

Europe. After Hungary abolished visa requirements in 1988 about 40.000 moved in, mostly to Budapest which has become a hub for Chinese trade into Eastern Europe. 3500 small trading companies have come into existence there. Many of them are located in old industrial building and unused railway facilities used as storehouses in Budapest's rundown Jozsefvaros (Josefstadt) district. In Italy there is a Chinese concentration, for instance, in the old textile town of Prato in Tuscany, where 24.000 live and revive the local industry albeit under Chinese labour conditions.

John Elkington and Jodie Thorpe retell the now fairly familiar tale of the sustainability risks in Chinese and Indian development. They originate in highly uneven social and regional development, in environmental hazards and in the energy intensity of production. In sum they risk to slow down progress at best, and at worst create significant political and economic turmoil (p. 97).

Some essays also cover cultural exchanges. Kazuo Ogura, the head of Japan Foundation, reviews the development of Japan's cultural exchange policies. Starting out with promoting a peaceful image in the post-war period, passing through the 1970s when a technological and economically advanced image was supported, to finally a contemporary focus on Japanese thoughts and concepts, from fashion and film to manga and food, rather than image promotion (p. 141). His German homologue, Hans-Georg Knoop head of Goethe Institute, agrees, yet advocates the notion of "interculturalism" instead of a dialogue of cultures (p. 190). His notion, however, remains as fuzzy as is the policy of his institute.

In a very thoughtful, knowledgeable essay Delfin Colome, formerly the head of ASEF, describes the emergence of outstanding Asian performers in Western classical music, "which is, today, global music" (p. 163). Its future has become dependent on Asia, he concludes.

Jose Manuel Barroso of the European Commission explains the relaunch of the EU's

failed Lisbon strategy of 2000. The intended comprehensive reforms and technological changes had not been enacted properly, due to a lack of focus, weak process governance and insufficient peer pressure (p. 203). These shortcomings would now be addressed by a bundle of liberalizing framework directives, a sizable research programme (€ 50 billion during 2007/13), and equally generous EIB and Rural development funds (p. 205).

Pascal Lamy of the WTO gives a glossy account of China's export performance. Similar to Barroso he argues for Europe to cope with globalization with the retraining of redundant workers and with investment in R&D and education. Asia's competition would have massive consequences for wages, employment and income distribution (p. 215).. Unsurprisingly he pleads for support for the multilateral trading system, and asks that newcomers should be given more room and voting rights in international organization, like the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank system, in order to develop a sense of ownership (p. 214).

In final contribution Professor Werner Weidenfeld demands a European Asia strategy worthy the name. He is right to argue that the EU's creation of "strategic partnerships" (like the ones with China, India and Japan) and the publication of diffuse strategy papers can hardly be termed a strategy (p. 226) which requires the definition of long-term goals, challenges and tactical tool and operational plans. He observes the EU's policies to be dominated by relations with China, and unwilling to make choices or to see India as counterweight to China (as the US do). At the same time EU policies are inconsistent (e.g. tough on Myanmar, soft on China) and dominated by member state competition, outbidding each other to Asian partners. Thus Europe foregoes its advantage, that China actually needs good EU relations to counterbalance the US dominance in its vision of a multipolar world. (p. 230)

(Albrecht Rothacher)