

a complex topic, offering interesting insights into the question of identity of Chinese Overseas and of China's changing attitude towards migration.

Christine Winkelmann

FRANK UMBACH, *Konflikt oder Kooperation in Asien-Pazifik? Chinas Einbindung in regionale Sicherheitsstrukturen und die Auswirkungen auf Europa*. (Internationale Politik und Wirtschaft, 68). München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2002. 395 pages, 2 maps, 65 tables, € 49.80. ISBN 3-486-56648-2

When Thomas L. Friedman asked a White House aide about China's reaction to the goings-on at the UN Security Council during the Iraq crisis ("China ought to be helping", *International Herald Tribune*, February 17, 2003), the reply was: "The Chinese? They don't have a dog in this fight." This comment reveals how little the People's Republic of China (PRC) bothered to take sides in the imminent military action by the U.S. to unilaterally remove Saddam from power.

As Frank Umbach shows in his book *Conflict or Cooperation in Asia-Pacific? China's Integration into Regional Security Frameworks and the Repercussions for Europe*, this kind of reluctant behavior is the rule rather than the exception with Chinese foreign policy, when it comes to multilateral frameworks. Indeed, despite a certain degree of institutional integration, most of the Southeast Asian countries essentially share this skepticism at surrendering part of their national sovereignty to international organizations, preferring instead informal agreements lacking any sanctioning mechanisms whatsoever.

However, there is a whole lot more to this book than this relatively simple insight. Umbach describes the current situation of Southeast Asia and China by covering a wide and diverse range of aspects. He elaborates on the volatile relationships between the individual countries of the region past and present, as well as the region's often ambiguous stance towards its gigantic neighbor.

The book discusses in depth the evolution and results to date of the progressive institutionalization of intra-regional cooperation through such bodies as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), or the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia-Pacific (CSCAP). Although Umbach gives priority to the PRC's involvement in this process, he does not neglect outside participants, foremost the United States. There is also some analysis of various efforts to establish non-proliferation and arms control regimes centering on Northeast Asia. Furthermore, Umbach takes into detailed account the repercussions of the Asian economic crisis of 1997 and the PRC's looming energy challenge. Finally, the book considers the Asian-European group dialogue with the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM), as well as perspectives for a trans-Atlantic strategy towards engaging the PRC.

Frank Umbach knows what he is talking about. Having himself participated in numerous Track-II (i.e. semi-official, consultative) negotiations at CSCAP between 1997 and 1999 and currently working as Senior Research Fellow of the German Society for Foreign Affairs (DGAP, Berlin) enables the German security expert to draw from his rich experience in both the realms of academic and hands-on international politics.

Even if the repercussions on Europe announced in the book's title remain somewhat elusive, *Conflict or Cooperation?* provides a vast amount of detailed data and supplies an excellent information basis for anyone wishing to gain a thoroughly elaborated overview of the security situation in Southeast Asia. It offers a refreshingly unconventional view on the region, void of any self-serving truisms or stereotypes that are now all too common regarding China. His perspective is neither clouded by an overly enthusiastic perception of China's supposedly unlimited market or her doubtless impressive cultural heritage, nor by dogmatic anti-Chinese sentiment deriving from militant anti-Communism. Not being naive about the perils of persistent instability, he nevertheless recognizes the potential of institutionalization achieved so far and duly denounces the adherence to obsolete principles of strict national sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs throughout the region. Readers not so proficient in German may have difficulties reading the text, whereas most of the tables are written in English which should render them more accessible.

Jan Schönfeld

WERNER BREITUNG, *Hongkong und der Integrationsprozess – Räumliche Strukturen und planerische Konzepte*. (Basler Beiträge zur Geographie, 48). Basel: Wepf & Co., 2001. XII, 228 Seiten, 62 Abbildungen, € 17,50. ISBN 3-85977-102-7

Die Untersuchung "der Veränderungen von Grenzregimen und Stadtfunktionen in Zeiten politischen, ökonomischen und gesellschaftlichen Wandels" am Beispiel Hongkongs hat sich der auf mehrere Jahre Schuldienst an einer deutschsprachigen Schule in Hongkong zurückblickende, 1963 geborene Autor zum Thema seiner im Februar 2001 an der Universität Basel vorgelegten Dissertation als Aufgabe gestellt. Dass sich der im Titel genannte "Integrationsprozess" – gemeint sind die seit der 1997 vollzogene Eingliederung der "Globalstadt" Hongkong in die VR China ablaufenden politischen, ökonomischen und sozialen Folgeerscheinungen in der ehemaligen britischen Kolonie – zwischen "Entkolonialisierung" und den übergeordneten, "supralokalen" Globalisierungseffekten abspielt und von beiden Faktorenbündeln in vielerlei Sicht "nachhaltig" beeinflusst und gesteuert wird, ist eine der Arbeitsthesen des Autors. Hierzu werden – dissertationstypisch – in fachtheoretisch allzu raumgreifenden Erörterungen die definitorisch hinreichend gesicherten geographischen Konzepte der