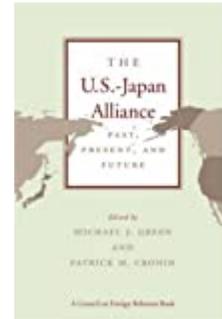




**Michael J. Green, Patrick M. Cronin, eds.** *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*. New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999. xix + 403 pp. \$19.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-87609-249-1.



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As its title suggests, the book under review offers a comprehensive evaluation of the military alliance between the United States and Japan, taking into particular consideration changes made to the alliance in the 1995-1997 period. The same editors had in 1994 produced a monograph entitled “Redefining the U.S.-Japan Alliance.”[1] In other words, the current volume represents a continuation of the argument for redefining the bilateral alliance rather than simply reaffirming a strategic relationship that has been in existence since the signing of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in September 1951.

The logic behind the argument for a redefinition of the alliance proceeds as follows. The regional strategic environment of East Asia continues to be unstable and its future uncertain. “The nature of China as an emerging great power and its relationship to the international system and to the United States and Japan” raise profound questions (p. 31). The future of the Korean peninsula remains uncertain as well (“Section One: the strategic environment”). The end of the Cold War brought new pressure on the management of the alliance as it was established in the 1950s (Okinawa bases being one of the more challenging issues). Given the North Korean missile launching in 1998 and the continuing difficulties in arms control negotiations between the United States and

China, a Theatre Missile Defense for East Asia becomes necessary (“Section Two: the military bond”). To succeed in either managing or redefining the alliance, it is necessary to come to grips with the changes the military alliance has brought to domestic political system and practices of Japan (“Section Three: the politics of the alliance”). Finally, Japan has benefited from the alliance in both its overall economic development since the 1950s (defense spending, trade arrangements) and specific areas of transfer of technology in joint armament production (Section Four: economics, technology, security).

Partly because the issue of U.S.-Japan security alliance and the related regional/systematic issues have been thoroughly debated in virtually all the major academic and policy journals [2], it is perhaps fair to say that few of the fourteen chapters break particularly new grounds in their arguments. They each represent an in-depth examination of one particular aspect of the alliance. The chapters by Paul S. Giarra (U.S. bases in Japan), Sheila A. Smith (history of U.S.-Japan military cooperation), and Mike M. Mochizuki (conceptualizing relationship between economics and security) stand out as quality ones and can serve as good examples for graduate students to use in learning to write their research papers.

The editors’ identification of the need to differenti-

ate between *reaffirming* and *redefining* the U.S.-Japan security alliance as it moves into the new century is right on the mark. The logic for *redefining* the alliance, as is presented in the current volume, however, is somewhat fuzzy. James Przystup's question "what kind of a power is China?" (P. 31) and his recommendation that the United States and Japan adopt Hans Morgenthau's strategy of treating China as neither an enemy nor a friend (pp. 39- 40) show that justification for continuing the alliance after the Cold War remains by and large the same as that for the Cold War. The United States' Cold War project in East Asia, i.e., the Korean War, the embargo, the U.S.-Japan alliance, as well as other "roll-back" and containment projects, were all premised on the potential of a Chinese upset of the regional status quo. Now after the Cold War, China's 1998 Defense White Paper is interpreted by Robert Manning to imply a Chinese desire to "eventually displace the United States as the pre-eminent power in Asia" (p. 57). China's continuing displeasure with U.S. supply of arms to Taiwan, its opposition to a Theatre Missile Defense system in Asia, and its demand for clarity in the scope of operations the 1997 revision of the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines covers are all symptoms of continuing strains in the trilateral security environment for China, Japan, and the United States. The authors correctly identify the nature of the 1995-1997 changes to the security alliance to be one of reaffirmation rather than redefinition. On the other hand, in a book that supposedly argues for *redefinition*, it is difficult to find a convincing set of arguments as to *why* and *how* the alliance should be redefined in response to and/or shaping up the regional strategic landscape.

Indeed, as long as one stays within the Realist mode of viewing the United States and Japan as "law-abiding nations" (p. 170) and casting as illegitimate any other nation-state that does not follow trajectories prescribed by the United States, then it is difficult, if possible at all, to think of better strategies than *fine-tuning* an existing *bilateral* alliance. As history has shown, regardless of how such an alliance is rationalized in rhetoric, it is aimed as an enemy and will have to deal with acts that trouble the alliance. To fine-tune a military alliance designed to deal with a Cold War regional environment for post-Cold War East Asia is far from redefining it.

The editors should be commended for bringing in considerations of economic factors affecting the U.S.-Japan alliance. The chapters by Mike Mochizuki and Laura Stone succinctly bring out the inter-relationships between economic matters (trade and investment) and the politics of managing the security alliance. The details

on armament cooperation between the United States and Japan (Gregg A. Rubinstein's chapter) and the development of technologies (Michael Chinworth's chapter) further drive home the message that the alliance is not a one-way street, contrary to nationalistic but poorly informed sentiments on both sides of the Pacific.

In considering the economic dimension of the U.S.-Japan security alliance, it would be advisable to include considerations of the *de facto* interdependence among the following five economies: China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and the United States. Moments of scare (the 1994 crisis over North Korea's suspected nuclear program; the 1996 Chinese live missile tests in the Taiwan Straits in particular) in the region did not lead to a shooting war, thanks to warnings from the other affected economies. Likewise, the first Clinton Administration refrained from pulling the trigger of a loaded gun in the debate over the most-favored-nation trade arrangement between the U.S. and China (1990-1994) and then moved on to arranging permanent normal trade relationship with China (2000). In addition, the member nation-states/economies that are most directly affected by the evolution of the U.S.-Japan security alliance are concurrently full members of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). In other words, there exists formal interdependence as well, in spite of the low level of legality in APEC and other Asian forums. Economic interdependence does not determine the outcome of political/security interactions bilaterally or regionally. But economic considerations certainly affect security operations and, therefore, ought to be part of the discussion on a bilateral alliance that has profound trilateral (U.S., Japan, China) and regional implications.

That said, evolutions of political/economic interactions outside the US-Japan axis generally point to a low and selective level of legalization - hence structured manageability - in dispute resolution. Part of the explanation, in the area trade at least, can be the frequent practice of highhandedness and unilateralism (in rule making and interpretation) by the United States government.[3] In the area of security management, there is even less evidence to suggest a convergence of approaches among the key players in the region. The loose arrangement made possible by ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum) is so far the most inclusive of all the security forums. In other words, developments in the region have not been kind to those who advocate a genuine redefinition of alliance arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region. It would mean taking an alliance out of its bilateral context and ridding it of the Realist orientation, i.e., beginning with confidence

building by having all on board and working out their differences rather than preparing to defeat that (group of) troublemaker in the making.

All in all, The U.S.-Japan Alliance is a good representation of scholarship on alliance politics in East Asia. In addition to learning a detailed history of U.S.-Japan alliance, students can learn to appreciate the difficulty Classical Realist theorization is facing in explaining international relations at the turn of the century.

#### Notes

[1]. Cronin, Patrick M. and Michael J. Green, *Redefining the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Tokyo's National Defense Pro-*

*gram* (Washington, DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 1994).

[2]. For example, International Security, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Japan Review of International Relations.

[3]. Miles Kahler, "Legalization as Strategy: the Asia-Pacific Case," *International Organization*, 54:3 (Summer 2000), pp. 549-571.

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