

Preface by the Editors

The international political and military-strategic importance of the Asian continent has dramatically increased in recent years and it is conceivable that world affairs in this century will be significantly influenced by developments in Asia.

This volume examines, on the one hand, the strategic goals of the most influential powers in the Eurasian region – in particular India, Pakistan, China, Russia and Japan, but also the USA that is strongly involved in the region, and on the other, the relations that these states have with each other. Special attention is paid to the subjective perceptions and thought patterns of the different players, for the perception that international political players have of the outside world is an important element that is frequently neglected in political and military analyses.

The articles have been arranged according to geographical criteria – starting with Central Asia, South Asia, China and Russia, and finishing with Japan.

In his introduction, **Rahul Peter Das** (Martin Luther University, Halle-Wittenberg) puts forward the theory that Europe – defined as the "European Union" – has irrevocably lost the privileged position it held in the international political system for most of the last century. Today, Europe is not only highly dependent upon the USA, it must also resign itself to the fact that, in international terms, nations such as China and India are regarded as its equals. The author accuses Europe of closing its eyes to this development and adhering to a narrow Euro-centric view of the world that falsely regards European values, legal and political concepts, and patterns and categories that developed in Europe as internationally valid.

Dietrich Reetz (Freelance expert for the history and politics of South Asia specialising in Islam) tries to trace the influences that shape the relationship of the two South Asian states to Central Asia. While historically the two regions enjoyed close cultural and religious ties, these have considerably loosened with time. Since the end of the Cold War in particular, India and Pakistan have been competing not only for the favour of the great powers, but also for access to Central Asia. The re-emerging transnational networks have not only facilitated political and economic cooperation, they have also helped the spread of weapons, drugs and extremist movements. The events of September 11 and the war in Afghanistan have made it clear that there is an urgent need for a long-term stabilisation of the region in order to pacify trouble spots that harm not only neighbouring regions, but also the cities of the West.

Birgit Brauer (Central Asia correspondent of the "Economist" in Almaty) deals with the situation in Central Asia. She provides a brief overview of current political and economic developments in the five Central Asian republics (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan). Despite the major differences that exist between the individual states, they all restrict – although to different degrees – democratic freedoms. And despite U.S. rhetoric about the importance of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, all five states can rely on financial support from the United States. The obvious double standard of U.S. policies causes anti-American feelings among the population that do not bode well for security and stability in the region.

Diethelm Weidemann (Humboldt-University, Berlin) analyses the relevance of Pakistan's self-perception, its specific understanding of history and perception of the state for Pakistan's foreign and security policy. The author asserts that Pakistanis' view of themselves and their country is characterised by contradictions and deficits, i.e. that there is an identity crisis, which stems from the historical roots of the Pakistani state. It was always formulated as an anti-thesis: to British colonial rule, but also to Hindu domination in South East Asia. Today, Pakistanis are caught up in a tangle of different identities and loyalties such as local and tribal identities or religious affiliations within Islam, some of which overlap or even directly clash with each other.

In his first article, **Dietmar Rothermund** (South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg) deals with the fact that under a surface of decades of democratic continuity, India has undergone a major transition. For a long time, the Congress Party ruled as the "centre" party of state and as the party that was carried by the state, not only at a national level, but also in most of the states of the Union. However, in recent years an ambitious middle class, consisting mostly of higher caste Hindus, has turned its back on the Congress Party, favouring instead the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which emphasises Hindu nationalism and criticises the minority-friendly policies of the Congress Party. Although the BJP is under strong pressure from its radical clientele, especially given the most recent activities of radical Islamic terrorists, the party leadership has remained relatively moderate and is trying to prevent an escalation of religious conflict.

Subrata K. Mitra (South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg) examines India's foreign policy. In the first part of his account he explores India's relations with the neighbouring states of Pakistan and China, whereby he divides the period since Independence into four phases. He starts from the premise that state and society are in a permanent state of interaction and that the perception of security on the part of states and societies is of crucial importance for any security policy analysis. In the second half of his article, Professor Mitra undertakes an examination of Indo-Pakistani relations with the help of game theory.

Erich Reiter (Commissioner for Strategic Studies at the Federal Ministry of Defence, Vienna) examines the strategic situation of India, which in recent years has emerged as a new global power. U.S. policy in South Asia has changed significantly since 2000 and now shows a preference for India over Pakistan. The Bush administration also continues to regard Japan as a key strategic partner in Asia, whereas relations with China have deteriorated somewhat in comparison to the approach taken by the Clinton administration. Reiter concludes that the strategic triangle formed by the United States, the Soviet Union and China, which largely dominated Asian politics during the Cold War, needs to be enlarged to take account of the key players India and Japan, thus complicating the analysis of international relations by multiplying the number of strategic triangles.

Christian Wagner (German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin) studies India's relations with the People's Republic of China, which he believes are crucial for any understanding of Indian foreign and security policy. While the conflict with Pakistan is the cause of regional tensions, it is the relationship with the People's Republic of China that determines India's power and influence in the international system. In addition to the latent rivalry, it has been possible to observe a growing rapprochement between the two states since the end of the Cold War. Despite their differing political situations, both states have shared ideas about the future structure of the international system and common security interests that oppose Western unilateralism.

Heinrich Kreft (German Embassy, Washington, D.C.) deals with relations between India and Russia, which are still suffering from the effects of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. India no longer regards Russia as a world power, but only as a regional great power, one to which, since its own rise to become a de facto nuclear power, it is in many ways equal. Russia views its traditional partner India as a cornerstone in its concept for a multipolar world and a partner, especially in the areas of military technology and civilian nuclear power. Russia supports India's rise as the leading power in South Asia, as it believes this will relativise U.S. influence in the region and also provide a balance to the growing influence of China. Finally, both Moscow and Delhi have a common interest in a lasting pacification of Afghanistan.

Dietmar Rothermund (South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg) illuminates relations between India and the USA. These increasingly deteriorated during the Cold War, reaching their nadir in the 1970s with the rapprochement between the USA and China. Two phenomena finally led to the end of this ice age. On the one hand, the end of the Cold War, on the other, the growing population of Indians in the USA are increasingly organising themselves and making themselves felt as voters. Obstacles to a further improvement in bilateral relations are India's ambition to become a nuclear

power and India's conflict with Pakistan, which has achieved crucial importance for the USA as an ally in its war against terrorism.

Kay Möller (German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin) deals with the strategic rivalry between China and India. According to this author, there have been two contradictory tendencies in China's policy toward India since the end of the Cold War (which are partly reflected in India's policy toward China). On the one hand, there are efforts to achieve normal to good relations. On the other, Beijing and Delhi still view themselves as strategic rivals for spheres of influence in the Far East. In Möller's opinion, the failure of the two states to form a "strategic partnership" is due above all to China's inability to distance itself sufficiently from its "old friend" Pakistan, and thus qualify as an honest broker in South Asia. Since Delhi started seeking closer relations with the USA in the early 1990s, Indian and U.S. relations in South East Asia, Central Asia and the Persian Gulf now seem to largely coincide.

Frank Umbach (Research Institute of the German Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin) examines the future impact of the dependency of Asia in general and China in particular, upon energy imports from the Middle East and Central Asia. China has been a net importer of energy for a number of years now and energy consumption is likely to continue rising rapidly in the next decades. China has few oil and gas deposits of its own and must restrict its use of its large coal reserves due to their disastrous impact on the environment. The author reaches the conclusion that China's energy security is also in the interests of the rest of the world if negative environmental and security policy consequences are to be avoided.

Xuewu Gu (Ruhr University, Bochum) examines whether and to what extent, the rise of the People's Republic of China to great power status has changed the "psychological environment" of the Chinese themselves and that of other nations. A contrastive analysis of Chinese, U.S., Indian and Russian perceptions shows that China's relationship with the USA is still shaped by deep distrust. To a lesser extent, the same is true of the mutual perceptions of China and Russia, because neither Beijing nor Moscow appear willing to place full trust in their "strategic partner." Nevertheless, Professor Gu sees no signs that any military conflict is imminent.

Dmitri V. Trenin (Carnegie Center, Moscow) examines the relationship between Russia and India. The traditionally friendly relationship – India was one of the few non-communist states to have signed a Friendship Treaty with the Soviet Union – cooled for a decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, there has been a new rapprochement since the start of this century due, among other reasons, to the fact that the interests of the two states are congruent in many areas. Both states, for example, regard international terrorism (in Chechnya and Kashmir) as the biggest current threat that faces them. However, the interests of the two states do not really run counter to one another in other foreign policy issues.

Martin Malek (National Defence Academy, Vienna) focuses on a special aspect of Russian foreign policy, namely relations with India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. He starts from the assumption that Russia continues to base its foreign and security policy on the concept of a multipolar world directed against a one-sided dominance of the USA. The "triangle" Russia – China – India in particular is directed to this purpose. However, owing to the continuing distrust between India and China this triangle has no chance of being institutionalised in the foreseeable future. Attempts to improve the relationship between Russia and Pakistan have met with only modest success so far. With regard to Afghanistan, the leadership in Moscow is convinced that the USA will withdraw sooner or later and is preparing to assume a leading role in the region once again.

Urs Schöttli (Correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" in Beijing) examines Japan's strategic goals and their realisation. Now that the Cold War has ended, Japan finds itself confronting new security and foreign policy challenges and is making an effort to increase its foreign policy profile, i.e. to shed its role as a mere paymaster. During the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, the government and parliament therefore took the politically sensitive decision to provide logistical

support for the USA. For the first time since the end of World War II, Japanese warships were deployed outside Japan's immediate neighbourhood. However, other measures will have to follow, in particular, a revision of Article 9 of the constitution that drastically restricts Japan's military options. At the same time, however, Japan has to counter the danger that its increased defence commitments will disrupt its (gravely burdened) relations with the other states in the region.

The editors would like to thank all the authors for their participation in this project and hope that this volume can make a contribution to creating an awareness among European security policy experts and decision-makers of the emerging developments in Asia and provide an insight into the patterns of action of the Asian players and the thought structures upon which they are based.

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