Asia Pacific in World Politics

Derek McDougall

i

Contents

Understanding Asia Pacific International Politics

<div style="text-align: right">1</div>

As a significant component of world politics, Asia Pacific confronts many major issues. This is a region in which the United States, China, and Japan relate directly to one another. The United States has been the dominant power in the region in the post-1945 period, and this situation has been enhanced in the post–Cold War period. At the same time China, which embarked on an ambitious program of economic modernization in the late 1970s, has grown steadily stronger. Are China and the United States on a collision course or can they cooperate? Where does Japan, as the world's second largest economic power, fit in this picture? Japan has maintained its alliance with the United States, while also developing a more independent direction; it does not wish to see the region dominated by China. Tensions have continued throughout the early twenty-first century in relation to both Taiwan and Korea. Are these tensions likely to result in war at some point? In Southeast Asia the various states have faced numerous "nation building" challenges, none more so than Indonesia. Many groups oppose the authority of the existing states, and these tensions often spill over into the international arena. Throughout Asia Pacific one can also observe the expanding presence of regional and global organizations. Does this presence amount to much, and if so what? Are we moving into an era when states, both major and lesser powers, will become less significant for Asia Pacific international politics? This book is concerned with this whole range of issues and questions as they appear in the current phase of world politics in Asia Pacific.

In providing a study of international politics in Asia Pacific, we need to have working definitions of both "international politics" and "Asia Pacific." Both terms are often taken for granted but, in fact, both are open to debate. We will begin with a discussion of how the terms international politics and

Asia Pacific are used in this book, and then examine the historical context of international politics in Asia Pacific, and some of the major features of contemporary Asia Pacific. At the end of the chapter there is an overview of the plan of the book.

■   Defining International Politics and Asia Pacific

International Politics

An everyday definition of "international politics" encompasses political relationships transcending state boundaries. Political relationships concern the pursuit of power and influence. Often the focus is on the relationship between states. While this dimension is certainly a very important aspect of international politics, it would be an oversimplification to see this as the whole. A broader view allows scope for actors other than states. These include international organizations, transnational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations. Along with states, these actors seek to further their objectives in the global arena. The term "global politics" is emerging to denote the wide variety of actors involved and the range of issues that arise. International or global issues in the contemporary world cover not just traditional military security, but many other forms of security (defense against terrorism being the most obvious one in the post–September 11 world). There are also major questions concerning economics, culture and religion, the environment, human rights, and the movement of people (immigration, refugees), to mention some of the more significant. The term "globalization" suggests the way many of these issues are dealt with at a global level. At the same time there are also movements and processes countering globalization or attempting to point it in a different direction. The continuing role of states is relevant here, as are developments at the regional and substate levels. "Antiglobalization" movements are not necessarily opposed to globalization as such, but certainly argue in favor of giving greater attention to the social, political, and environmental impacts of the prevailing economic orthodoxy.

The different views on the nature of international politics are reflected in some of the important theoretical approaches. At one level these approaches can be distinguished on the basis of how they characterize the key actors and processes in international politics. There can also be differences relating to the significance and content of the moral dimension of international politics. During the Cold War the realist approach dominated the study of international politics. In the post–Cold War era this approach has been challenged by newer approaches such as liberalism (also referred

to as liberal institutionalism) and globalization theory. Various critical approaches emphasize the importance of moral goals. There is also an issue about whether the major theories are too Western-oriented. Culturalistic approaches emphasize the way factors specific to particular states or societies (in this case in the Asian context) influence international behavior. We will briefly review some of the major theoretical approaches, since one needs to be aware of the assumptions underlying the analysis presented in this book.[1]

Mid-twentieth-century realism is associated with writers such as E. H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau.[2] Their focus was on the role of states in international politics, and how the behavior of states is motivated by power considerations. States sought to protect and advance their national interest. At a minimum national interest involved the protection of a state's territorial integrity, but broader strategic, economic, societal, and cultural dimensions were usually also involved. A state's ability to achieve its objectives was determined by its power, involving military, economic, political, and other dimensions. The balance of power was the most important feature in the functioning of international politics. In pursuing their objectives states sought to make common cause with other states having similar interests in a given situation. They would act to oppose states seen as threatening those interests. Traditional realists were opposed to moralism in international politics, that is, the belief that good would prevail through means such as international law and international organization irrespective of power realities. Morgenthau in particular was also critical of ideologically motivated crusades. Nevertheless Carr and Morgenthau, although differing in their approaches, both saw moral principles as a very important feature of international politics. The issue was to work out what those principles should be and how they should be implemented.

In the latter decades of the twentieth century an important development was the emergence of neorealism, associated in particular with Kenneth Waltz.[3] Waltz's key argument was that the international behavior of states derived from the anarchical character of international politics. States had to protect themselves in a situation where there was no overriding authority. Balancing behavior was the most obvious example of how states sought to achieve their security goals. In Waltz's view international politics was best explained in terms of the nature of the system as a whole, rather than by focusing on the characteristics of states or even human nature. He gave less explicit attention to moral issues than did Carr and Morgenthau. Nevertheless goals such as peace and security are important to Waltz. His concern is to show how the achievement of such goals is dependent upon understanding how states function in international politics.

Liberalism (or liberal institutionalism) provides an important alternative to the various versions of realism.[4] As an approach to international politics, liberalism places some emphasis on the role of states but also gives attention to other actors such as international organizations, transnational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations. Whereas realism focuses on the high politics of security issues, liberalism puts more emphasis on issues concerning economic and social interactions (low politics). The interdependence of all actors in the international domain is a particular theme. In general, liberalism is not explicitly concerned with moral issues. There is, however, an assumption that increasing interdependence will promote international peace and promote human welfare.

Some of the themes in liberalism are developed further in globalization theory.[5] Globalization as a theoretical approach is particularly important in fields such as sociology and international political economy, but it also has implications for understanding international politics. The key point is that increasingly political, economic, social, and cultural processes need to be understood on a global level. In the economic domain there is an assumption (no doubt oversimplified) that the global marketplace is dominant. Individual states have less control over their destiny in such a situation (although this can vary with the particular state, of course). From this perspective the high politics of realism is dealing with only one aspect of a very complex world, and is thus grossly oversimplified. While some globalization theorists see the phenomenon leading to a more cosmopolitan and fairer world, this is not necessarily the case. The antiglobalization movement is in some respects a misnomer as supporters of this movement are not necessarily opposed to globalization as such. What they are critical of is the idea that the global marketplace should be regarded as some kind of juggernaut that necessarily takes priority over other kinds of values articulated through various political means, whether states or groups based in civil society.

The emphasis on viewing international politics from the perspective of underlying values is a key feature of various critical approaches. Some of the approaches come under the general term of "critical theory," although there are also more specific formulations (e.g., the various feminist perspectives on international politics). Some of the critical approaches have distinctive views on the functioning of international politics. The most obvious example is the way in which feminist approaches see the various actors and processes of international politics as gendered, and with generally adverse effects on women. Irrespective of the interpretation of international processes, critical approaches share the view that it is necessary to discern the values implicit in international politics at various levels, and to subject those values to critical scrutiny. The complementary challenge is to develop

and implement values that will more fully strengthen humanity than does existing international politics. An important issue here is whether priority should be given to participation in states (as argued by communitarians) or to the global arena (the cosmopolitan position).

All of the approaches that have been outlined so far are global in perspective but have been developed primarily in a Western context. The culturalistic approach argues that in explaining the dynamics of international politics one needs to give greater attention to factors that are specific to particular states and cultures. Lucian Pye suggests that contrary to the view that power is "a single basic phenomenon which operate[s] according to universal principles, regardless of time, place or culture . . . people at different times and in different places have had quite different understandings of the concept of power."[6] One needs to be aware of the specific and general values that people involved in international interactions (whether in a governmental role or otherwise) bring to their task, and of the factors affecting those values. These factors can include the impact of history, as well as more immediate considerations of economics and domestic politics. One cannot assume that factors operating at a global level necessarily determine the behavior of individual actors. Factors specific to particular actors also need to be taken into account. Different levels are relevant, and to focus simply on one level is to risk oversimplification of a complex reality. In terms of the moral dimension of international politics the culturalistic approach draws attention to the diversity of perspectives in the world. Samuel Huntington believes this diversity represents a fundamental "clash of civilizations."[7] An alternative view is that while there is clearly diversity, different manifestations of a considerable degree of underlying unity in humanity are represented.[8]

At one level the approach to international politics in this book is eclectic. The study is not intended as a theoretical work, but it draws on a number of approaches. There is a strong emphasis on the role of states, but not to the exclusion of other actors. While at a general level states as such might have declined in significance in international politics, they still play a dominant role in relation to many issues. This is particularly the case with the major powers in the region, but applies to other states too. The book has a major emphasis on strategic issues in Asia Pacific, but economic issues are also considered, and there is some attention to the "new international agenda." Taking up the argument of the culturalistic approach, there is a strong emphasis on the particular circumstances of the relevant actors. These circumstances cover not just culture in the general sense, but other more specific factors such as the impact of domestic politics and the economic environment. Moral issues emerge mainly through the analysis of the perspectives of key actors. Issues of peace, security, and

justice are foremost. An important question concerns the extent to which states see these issues primarily in terms of national interests, as compared to broader conceptions of regional and global interests. The underlying motivation of other actors is also relevant in this context. An important consideration is the extent to which the processes of international politics in Asia Pacific limit the ability to achieve desired moral goals.

Asia Pacific

Having indicated the approach taken to international politics in this book, it is also necessary to define the use of the term "Asia Pacific." All regions are constructs. States generally promote definitions of regions to suit their own purposes. The concept of Asia Pacific dates from the 1960s and 1970s.[9] It was promoted by countries such as the United States, Japan, and Australia as a means of linking East Asia to the wider Pacific region. "Asia Pacific" highlights the Asian dimension in a way that "Pacific region" does not. "East Asia" is obviously more geographically limited and excludes powers such as the United States and Australia. "Far East" as a term is Eurocentric and historically dated. From a political perspective "Asia Pacific" legitimizes the involvement of the United States in East Asian affairs. The United States cannot describe itself as an Asian power but its extensive involvement in the Pacific justifies describing it as part of Asia Pacific. US support has been a major factor in enabling the concept to become established.[10] Although they do not carry the weight of the United States, Pacific-oriented Western countries such as Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have similar reasons for supporting the construct. In the case of Japan an important factor behind its support was that while the concept provided a justification for continued US involvement in East Asian affairs, it also multilateralized that involvement. From Japan's perspective this meant that if tensions arose in US-Japanese relations, there could be possibilities for defusing such tensions in wider regional settings.

As previously indicated, the term "Pacific region" does not contain any specific reference to Asia. The major alternative regional construct has been "East Asia," which excludes Western powers such as the United States. From the late 1980s the main advocate for this approach was Mahathir Mohamad, prime minister of Malaysia from 1981 to 2003. Although Malaysia became a member of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), formed in 1989, Mahathir's preference was for an East Asian Economic Grouping or Caucus. The "East Asian" approach received a fillip at the time of the Asian economic crisis in 1997, with the subsequent emergence of ASEAN Plus Three (i.e., the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, together with China, Japan, and South Korea). In December 2005 a new

grouping, known as the East Asia Summit, emerged following a meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

The usual definition of "Asia Pacific," and the one used in this book, includes East Asia and the Western powers of the Pacific (the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand). East Asia can be divided into Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. Northeast Asia covers China (including Hong Kong), Taiwan (claimed by China), Japan, South Korea (Republic of Korea, or ROK), North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or DPRK), Russia (specifically the Russian Far East or Pacific Russia), and Mongolia. Southeast Asia comprises Brunei, Burma (known officially as Myanmar), Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Apart from East Timor, all of the Southeast Asian countries are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). While Australia and New Zealand are the major powers of the South Pacific, the entire Pacific islands region comes within a definition of Asia Pacific. Together with Australia and New Zealand, the independent and self-governing island states constitute the Pacific Islands Forum. The most significant of the island states are Papua New Guinea and Fiji. It should also be pointed out that some definitions of Asia Pacific include not just the United States and Canada, but the Pacific seaboard countries of Latin America. Mexico, Peru, and Chile are members of APEC, for example. India also interacts with Asia Pacific in various ways.

There is some focus in this book on the major powers of Asia Pacific: the United States, China, and Japan. Because these powers are particularly engaged in Northeast Asia, there is a strong emphasis on that subregion. At the same time attention is also given to Southeast Asia as another significant subregion. While the role of the major powers receives special attention, lesser but still significant powers are also considered. These include Taiwan, the two Koreas, Indonesia, Russia, and Australia. Apart from the focus on states the regional dimension (both Asia Pacific and subregional in the case of Southeast Asia) is an important theme in the discussion of international organizations. Regional organizations play a significant role in giving substance to the Asia Pacific concept.

■ The Historical Context

While the focus in this book is on the contemporary era and the recent past, many of the issues we deal with have deep historical roots. Therefore it is helpful to provide an outline of some of the major phases in the history of Asia Pacific international politics. At this stage it is appropriate to provide an overview of the historical context in terms of the following phases: first,

the era of traditional civilizations; second, the era of imperialism; and third, the 1945–1989 period.[11] Throughout the book there will be discussion of the historical context where this is relevant to the issue in question.

Traditional Civilizations

Contemporary Asia Pacific is organized as a system of states based on the Westphalian model developed in Europe in 1648. The shift to this model resulted from the impact of Europeans in the region, but the Westphalian system was not the prevailing model historically. China was the dominant force in Northeast Asia, but it functioned as a "civilization" rather than as a "state" or "sovereign power" in the modern Western sense. Viewing itself as the Middle Kingdom, China developed as a distinctive civilization over a period of thousands of years. Although there were periods of conflict and division within China, Chinese civilization also made significant contributions in the development of bureaucracy (the mandarin system), science and technology, the arts, agriculture and industry, commerce, and philosophy (particularly Confucianism and Taoism). While the writ of the emperors ran wide, China saw itself primarily as a model for others within its "civilization area" to follow. Chinese influence was particularly strong in Korea and Vietnam. This influence was not just cultural, as the leaders of these entities were also required to pay tribute to the Chinese emperor. China was also the dominant cultural influence in the development of Japan. In this case, however, Japan followed a policy of isolating itself from the outside world as much as possible. Hence Japanese civilization also developed along its own lines; Japanese rulers did not pay tribute to China. In the Chinese view of the world, people living beyond its civilizational influence were characterized as barbarians. There was minimal interaction.

In Southeast Asia the situation was even more complex. While China was an important influence in the northern part of Southeast Asia, particularly in Vietnam, Indian civilization also had a major impact. The term "Indo-China" originally covered the whole of mainland Southeast Asia and reflected the dual influences. Hinduism and Buddhism in Southeast Asia derive originally from India. Cambodia (Angkor) was one Southeast Asian empire where the influence of Indian civilization was strong. The survival of Bali as a predominantly Hindu island within a largely Muslim Indonesia is a reflection of earlier Indian influence. Traders brought Islam to maritime Southeast Asia (modern Indonesia, Malaysia, and the southern Philippines) from about the thirteenth century. No single empire dominated Southeast Asia. Significant political entities included Angkor, Champa (central and southern Vietnam), Srivijaya and Majapahit (successive states covering an extensive region of modern Indonesia), Pagan (Burma), and Sukhothai and

Ayutthya (successive states in the area of modern Thailand). Rather than using Western principles of sovereignty, these entities were based on a "mandala" (circle) system. Power was concentrated at the center of the entity but was more diffuse the further one moved from the center. This meant that between adjoining centers of power there would be grey areas where local leaders might hold sway or where there might be overlapping layers of authority.[12]

The Era of Imperialism

The advent of extensive European involvement in the region from the fifteenth century did not mean the immediate replacement of the existing international system by a Western-oriented one. Europeans were particularly interested in trade, and missionaries also became involved in some areas. Trade did not necessarily require the establishment of political control. It was generally preferable to have cooperative relationships with local rulers. One vehicle for European penetration was through mercantile companies such as the Dutch United East India Company (VOC). Trading centers and forts were established in some regions and these sometimes came under the political control of European powers. Portugal was the earliest European power to become involved in the region with a particular interest in the Spice Islands (later known as the Moluccas or Maluku). Malacca (in modern Malaysia) and Macau (China) were important Portuguese centers. Spain became involved in the Philippines but did not extend its interest much beyond there. Later the Netherlands superseded Portugal as the most active European power in the region. Its particular interest was in what later became the Netherlands East Indies (modern Indonesia). The Dutch were also the only outsiders allowed access to Japan after 1639, with a settlement at Nagasaki. The British and French were active in the so-called Far East from at least the eighteenth century.

The greatest external pressure on the existing international system in East Asia occurred during the nineteenth century. This pressure took different forms in Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. In Northeast Asia the imperialist powers generally sought domination but, with some exceptions, did not emphasize the acquisition of territory. There were means other than annexation to ensure the achievement of strategic and economic objectives. The changing situation was most obvious in relation to China. Particularly from the time of the Opium War in 1842 (between Britain and China), China was forced to make a number of concessions to Western powers through a series of unequal treaties. Some of these concessions involved territory (Hong Kong being a notable example). Another sign of China's weakness was the imposition of a system of extraterritoriality, whereby

Westerners were generally subject to the laws of their own countries rather than those of China. Western powers established spheres of influence in different regions of China: Britain in the Yangtze valley and adjoining Hong Kong; France in Yunnan next to Indochina; Germany in the Shantung peninsula; and so on. The United States pursued an open-door policy with the aim of giving all external powers equal access to China. Russia put the most emphasis on territorial expansion at China's expense. This reflected Russia's economic weakness: annexation would allow Russians to be given preferential treatment in a way that was not possible when open competition prevailed. Its expansion into Siberia dated from the seventeenth century. During the nineteenth century it acquired parts of Central Asia from China, as well as the area adjacent to Vladivostok. Northern Manchuria became a Russian sphere of influence.

In Northeast Asia Japan was also subjected to strong Western pressures, but the outcome there was very different from that in China. In 1853–1854 Commodore Matthew Perry of the US Navy was instrumental in bringing Japan's self-imposed isolation to an end. Japan, too, faced unequal treaties and the imposition of a system designed to bring commercial advantages to Westerners. With the Meiji Restoration of 1868, however, Japan took steps to strengthen its political and economic system from within. The aim was to resist Western encroachments and to compete with the Western powers on their own terms. Japan achieved remarkable success in this respect. By the end of the nineteenth century Japan had joined the Western powers in making gains at China's expense and was also competing strongly with Russia in Northeast Asia. Following its success in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–1895, Japan acquired Taiwan. Japan also won a stunning victory in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905. Manchuria came predominantly under Japanese influence. Then, following a short period of Japanese "protection," by 1910 Korea was a Japanese colony.

During the 1930s and early 1940s the main territorial threat to China came from Japan. The inability of the Q'ing dynasty to resist imperialist encroachments had led to its downfall in the 1911 revolution. China remained weak, however. Warlords controlled important regions of the country. From 1927 conflict between the communists (led by Mao Tse-tung) and the ruling nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek contributed to China's weakness. In 1931 Japanese forces seized Manchuria and established the puppet state of Manchukuo. In 1937 war broke out between Japan and China, first in the north but extending subsequently to large parts of eastern China. From 1941 this conflict became the China theater of the Pacific War.

As compared with Northeast Asia, in Southeast Asia there was a stronger emphasis on territorial expansion by the Western powers. Japan did

not become involved in this territorial expansion until the Pacific War. As previously indicated, up until the early nineteenth century the Western powers in Southeast Asia had established some centers and limited areas where they had political control. During the course of the nineteenth century there was greater competition among those powers, which encouraged the acquisition of colonies in certain regions. Colonial control took various forms, depending on the particular situation; local political factors were often important. The main changes in Southeast Asia involved Britain, France, and the Netherlands. Britain became the colonial power in Burma, the Malay Peninsula, Singapore, and northern Borneo. France acquired Indochina: Vietnam (administered as Tongking, Annam, and Cochinchina, running from north to south), Cambodia, and Laos. The Netherlands extended its control throughout the entire Indonesian archipelago to constitute the Netherlands East Indies. In addition to the three European powers, the United States became a colonial power when it acquired the Philippines from Spain following the latter's defeat in the Spanish-American War of 1898–1899. Within Southeast Asia only Thailand (then known as Siam) escaped colonial rule. This was largely due to the country's location as a buffer zone between the British and French spheres in mainland Southeast Asia.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, nationalist movements developed as a challenge to Western rule in a number of Southeast Asian countries. The most significant movements were in Vietnam and Indonesia. The greatest challenge to the existing colonial system, however, came with Japanese expansion into the region during the Pacific War. Japan wished to incorporate Southeast Asia into its Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. In this scheme Southeast Asia would be a major source of raw materials for Japanese industry. Japan occupied all of the British, Dutch, and US possessions in Southeast Asia. In Indochina Japan had the cooperation of the Vichy French government in Indochina for much of the war, but took more direct control in the closing phases. Thailand also cooperated with Japan. Nationalist movements in Indonesia and Burma worked with Japan as a means of advancing their own goals. With Japan's defeat in 1945, clearly the reimposition of the previous colonial system would be no easy task.

The 1945–1989 Period

The main dimensions of international relations in Asia Pacific in the post–Cold War era emerged during the 1945–1989 period. This is sometimes referred to as the era of the Cold War, but to say that the Cold War was the dominant theme in the region's international relations would be an

oversimplification. Important themes in the history of international rela-
tions in Asia Pacific during this period included the new international roles
of China and Japan, the position adopted by the United States, the Cold
War conflicts in the 1950s and 1960s, decolonization in Southeast Asia, the
Sino-Soviet conflict, the Sino-American rapprochement of the 1970s, the
emergence of Southeast Asian regionalism, and postcolonial conflicts in
Southeast Asia. To appreciate the significance of these various themes and
their interrelationships it will be helpful to focus on three key phases: the
late 1940s, the 1950s and 1960s, and the 1970s and 1980s.

Late 1940s. The late 1940s laid the foundations for international relations
in Asia Pacific for the entire postwar period. The United States occupied
defeated Japan from 1945 to 1951. At first the United States was intent on
democratizing and demilitarizing Japan. The aim was to ensure that Japan
would never again become a threat. By 1947, however, the United States
had shifted tack due to changes occurring at a global level. The onset of
the Cold War meant that the containment of communism, and specifically
of the Soviet Union, became its first priority, and the United States wished
to ensure that Japan would be an ally in that struggle. Hence the radical ob-
jectives of the early occupation were superseded in favor of a more con-
servative policy. The United States concluded a lenient peace treaty with
Japan in 1951; at the same time, a mutual security treaty linked Japan to
the emerging US alliance system.

   While developments in Japan were consistent with US Cold War objec-
tives, developments in China were more of a setback. At the time of World
War II the United States had expected China to play a major role as a re-
placement for Japan in East Asia. On that basis China became one of the
permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. With Japan's
defeat, however, full-scale civil war resumed between the communists and
nationalists in China. Although the United States initially had hopes of ef-
fecting compromise, for the most part it favored the nationalists. However,
the position of the nationalists had been weakened by the war with Japan
and the communists extended their political support in many areas. Over the
period 1945–1949 the communists advanced from their bases in northern
China and by late 1949 controlled the whole of the mainland. The People's
Republic of China (PRC) was proclaimed on 1 October 1949. Clearly this
development had major implications for the international situation in Asia
Pacific. The United States interpreted the emergence of the PRC as a fillip
for the Soviet Union, and certainly a Sino-Soviet alliance was created in
1950. The Chinese revolution had received little support from Stalin, how-
ever, who maintained diplomatic relations with the nationalist government

until well into 1949. Sino-Soviet tensions would remain largely hidden but by the 1960s there was open conflict.

In Southeast Asia in the late 1940s Cold War issues had some impact, but the major changes related to the issue of decolonization. With the defeat of Japan, the two colonial powers most intent on restoring their pre-war positions were France and the Netherlands. In both cases conflict ensued with the relevant nationalist movements. In Vietnam, war between France and the communist-led Viet Minh lasted from 1946 to 1954. The Viet Minh's communist orientation made it suspect in the eyes of the United States. From the US perspective the success of the Viet Minh would bolster the position of China and the USSR in the region. In Indonesia the conflict was a more straightforward contest between colonialism and nationalism, and by 1949 the Netherlands had conceded independence. The United States granted independence to the Philippines in 1946, as did Britain in the case of Burma in 1948.

1950s and 1960s. In the 1950s and 1960s international relations in Asia Pacific were dominated by the confrontation between China and the United States. Direct conflict between the two powers occurred in the context of the Korean War of 1950–1953, which commenced with (communist) North Korea's attack on (anticommunist) South Korea on 25 June 1950. With UN authorization US forces (supported by forces from a number of other countries) had come to the assistance of South Korea. However, instead of stopping at the dividing line between the two Koreas (the 38th parallel), the United States decided to take the conflict into the north. China felt threatened, and Chinese "volunteers" entered the war from late 1950.[13] China had also been affected at the very start of the war when the sending of the US Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait meant that Chinese communist forces could not liberate Taiwan from the nationalists. The nationalist government was able to consolidate its position as the Republic of China. US diplomatic relations continued with the nationalists and a mutual defense treaty was signed in 1954. The PRC became the main focus of the US containment strategy in Asia Pacific. The PRC saw US protection of Taiwan as unwarranted interference in the Chinese civil war. From the Chinese perspective the United States was attempting "encirclement" of China.

In the 1960s the emergence of the Vietnam War also highlighted the Sino-US confrontation. The United States interpreted the conflict between Vietnamese communist forces and the anticommunist Saigon government from the perspective of its global strategy of containment. Both the USSR and China were seen as supporting the Vietnamese communists. It was believed that the defeat of South Vietnam would mean an extension of Chinese power.

The United States slowly realized the significance of the emerging Sino-Soviet conflict. China and the USSR saw each other as rivals, not allies. There was an important element of "power politics" in this conflict and each country competed for influence in different regions of the world. In Vietnam, for example, China and the USSR did not engage in a cooperative endeavor, but instead vied for dominant influence. There were territorial differences, with their origins in earlier expansion by Tsarist Russia at China's expense. Racial tensions recalled the earlier imperialist era. The fact that both powers espoused communism added an important ideological dimension to the conflict. Irrespective of whether ideology was a fundamental cause of the rivalry, it certainly added to the bitterness of the exchanges.

During the 1950s and 1960s Japan gradually emerged once again as a major economic power in Asia Pacific. It relied on the United States for defense. There were significant US forces in Japan, and Okinawa remained under US control until 1972. Japan acted as a rear base for the United States during the Korean War, and also gave low-level support to the United States during the Vietnam War. Under the Yoshida Doctrine, dating from the early 1950s, Japan concentrated on its own economic development and spent no more than about 1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on defense. Under Article 9 of the 1947 "peace constitution" Japan had forsworn the use of force in its international relations, but this was subsequently interpreted to allow for self-defense. There was a mismatch between Japan's growing economic strength and its very limited international political role.

In Southeast Asia issues of decolonization continued to have an impact. From the Vietnamese communist perspective the Vietnam War was simply a continuation of the earlier struggle against the French for independence. Malaya became independent from Britain in 1957 and was joined in 1963 by Singapore and the northern Borneo territories in the new federation of Malaysia (Singapore separated in 1965). This development provoked a conflict with Indonesia. Sukarno, Indonesia's first president, saw the new federation as a neocolonial scheme to perpetuate British influence, and mounted an anti-Malaysia campaign known as "Konfrontasi" (Confrontation). Under Sukarno's leadership Indonesia had espoused an increasingly radical direction, but Sukarno himself fell following an attempted leftist coup in September 1965. The military regime or New Order that emerged under President Suharto was strongly anticommunist and, in fact, hundreds of thousands of alleged communists and their sympathizers were massacred. The changes in Indonesia brought an end to Confrontation. They also prepared the way for a new regionalism when the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was founded in 1967. This was

a way of strengthening the relations among the non-communist countries in Southeast Asia and of integrating Indonesia into regional affairs. Apart from Indonesia, the founding members were Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

1970s and 1980s. During the 1970s and 1980s the most significant development in international relations at the broadest regional level was the emergence and development of the Sino-US rapprochement. The Nixon administration, which took office at the beginning of 1969, sought to achieve improved relations with both China and the USSR, thereby improving US leverage with both communist powers. China regarded its conflict with the USSR to be more threatening than its conflict with the United States. Improved US relations would enable China to focus its efforts on its issues with the USSR. This convergence in perspectives paved the way for a visit to China by President Richard Nixon in February 1972. In the Shanghai Communiqué, as signed by the two sides, the United States to all intents and purposes recognized the "one China" principle, while also maintaining its interest in a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. The United States and the PRC did not establish formal diplomatic relations until 1979, at which point US recognition of the Republic of China (Taiwan) ceased and the mutual security treaty also ended. Taiwan became more isolated, although the United States provided for unofficial relations with Taiwan and continuing arms sales through the Taiwan Relations Act (1979). Apart from the changes in the US-China-Taiwan relationship, the effect of the Sino-US rapprochement was to end polarization in the region and to allow for greater fluidity in international relationships. There was added scope for regional countries to develop relations with both China and the United States and to pursue more independent policies.

From the US perspective the Sino-US rapprochement made withdrawal from the Vietnam conflict easier. It would have been much more difficult for the United States if it were presented as a boost for the major communist powers, and China in particular. Such an argument was difficult to sustain in light of the accommodation between China and the United States. US withdrawal was provided for in the Paris accords of 1973; by April 1975 the Saigon government had fallen. While Vietnam as a whole now came under communist rule, and communist governments also emerged in Cambodia and Laos, this did not bring peace to Indochina. The Khmer Rouge government in Cambodia pursued radical communist policies resulting in extensive loss of life. It was also strongly anti-Vietnamese. Vietnam intervened in Cambodia in late 1978 and deposed the Khmer Rouge government. The resulting conflict, lasting until 1991, was known as the Third Indochina War.

Vietnam installed a pro-Vietnamese government in Phnom Penh. Arrayed against Vietnam and its Cambodian supporters was the anti-Vietnamese resistance. While the Khmer Rouge was the strongest element in the resistance, rightist and royalist (Sihanoukist) groups were also involved. At the international level the strongest dimension of the conflict related to the Sino-Soviet conflict. China supported the anti-Vietnamese resistance while the USSR backed Vietnam. The ASEAN countries and the United States also supported the opposition to Vietnam.

A major development affecting the Third Indochina War was the Sino-Soviet rapprochement of 1989. While this had implications for international politics more broadly, in relation to Indochina it meant that the main external parties had agreed about a framework for resolving the conflict. Securing agreement among the Cambodian parties required a further two years, after which the UN became involved in a process of transition, culminating in elections in 1993.

The greater fluidity in international relations in Asia Pacific following the Sino-US rapprochement had implications for Japan, which was able to expand its international role. Okinawa reverted to Japanese rule in 1972, but it remained the major US base in the region. The United States encouraged Japan to expand its international role but Japan remained cautious. The "peace constitution" was a limitation, but it also reflected widely held Japanese sentiment. Neighboring countries, particularly China and South Korea, were suspicious of any moves by Japan to expand its security role. There was increased opportunity for Japan in terms of economic diplomacy and areas such as aid. Japan was active in the Group of 7 (the world's major economic powers, known as G7) and expanded its links with Southeast Asia. However, Japanese strength could also lead to resentment in many countries.

Japanese economic development provided a model for certain other East Asian countries to follow. The emergence of the Asian Tigers was a noteworthy development in the 1970s and 1980s. South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore were the main examples. They experienced very high growth rates and emphasized export-led industrialization. Governments often played an active role in stimulating the economy. In the case of South Korea its economic development contributed to tensions with North Korea. Whereas in the 1950s and 1960s the economic situation of the two countries was more comparable in terms of measures such as per capita GDP, by the 1970s and 1980s South Korea was economically more successful. This possibly contributed to various acts of terror undertaken by North Korea during these decades, including the assassination of members of the South Korean cabinet in Rangoon in 1983 and the destruction of a South Korean airliner in 1987.

Apart from the Third Indochina War, an important development in the international politics of Southeast Asia during the 1970s and 1980s was the strengthening of regionalism. ASEAN, founded in 1967, assumed a new importance after the Bali summit of 1976; it became the major regional focus for the non-communist countries in an increasingly significant way. This was related to the end of the Vietnam War. With the reduction of the US presence in the region the strategic landscape in Southeast Asia required reassessment. Ironically, the Third Indochina War contributed to the stronger ASEAN focus in the late 1970s and 1980s.

In the 1970s and 1980s East Timor was the major unresolved issue of decolonization in Southeast Asia. The Portuguese presence in this territory was a vestige of the colonial era dating back to the sixteenth century. Political changes in Portugal in 1974 raised the question of Portuguese Timor's future. Indonesia preferred to see East Timor become part of Indonesian territory, but was frustrated by the strong popular support for Fretilin, a radical nationalist movement. Indonesia invaded the territory in late 1975 and later incorporated it as the twenty-seventh Indonesian province. Resistance to Indonesian rule continued for some decades.

While East Timor was an issue relating to Western colonialism, the subsequent development of the conflict there highlighted how the post-colonial state system in Southeast Asia was often imposed against the will of significant groups. Many groups within Southeast Asian states saw themselves as nations in their own right and wished to establish their own states. In Indonesia, for example, there were significant separatist movements in Aceh and West Papua (at the western and eastern ends of the archipelago respectively). In the southern Philippines, Muslims resisted rule from Manila. In Burma the various hill peoples (the Karen, the Kachin, the Wa, and the Mon) had opposed the Rangoon government from the time of independence. These conflicts weakened the states in Southeast Asia. Separatist movements sought international support for their cause.

These various developments in Asia Pacific in the 1970s and 1990s indicate some of the main features of the regional context at the end of the Cold War. There is no precise date for this event, although the fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989 is often regarded as of major symbolic importance. The end of the Cold War had a greater impact in Europe than in Asia Pacific. Europe was more polarized between East and West. The Sino-Soviet conflict had been a complicating factor in Asia Pacific in terms of any simple polarization. As far as the United States was concerned, the main contest in Asia Pacific had been with China, and that relationship had been transformed with the achievement of rapprochement in 1972. In Asia Pacific the major developments relating to the end of the Cold War concerned the Soviet Union. The achievement of Sino-Soviet rapprochement has already been

noted. Soviet-Japanese relations did not change significantly. Soviet-US re-
lations clearly changed at the global level and in Europe in particular but
there were also implications in the North Pacific. Tensions relating to the op-
posing military deployments of the United States and the USSR in this re-
gion did ease at this time.

■ Major Features of Contemporary Asia Pacific

While understanding the historical background helps to put recent develop-
ments in the international politics of Asia Pacific into context, it is construc-
tive to be aware of some of the key features of the polities of the region. It
is often assumed that the actors composing a region have much in common.
This can vary. In the case of the European Union a high level of integration
exists compared to many other regions of the world. While there are differ-
ences among member states, there are also numerous common features in
relation to political and economic systems, types of societies, cultures, and
underlying values. Asia Pacific is at the opposite end of the spectrum. There
is considerable diversity in all of these features. To put the substantive chap-
ters of the book into context it will be useful at this point to remind our-
selves of the existing diversity. This can be done in relation to the various
features mentioned as points in common for the European Union; namely,
political systems, economic systems, types of societies, cultures, and under-
lying values. Considering this diversity, it is useful to ask what gives Asia
Pacific coherence as a region.

Political Systems

Asia Pacific encompasses a broad range of political systems. This is evi-
dent first of all in relation to the major powers. Both the United States and
Japan have liberal democratic political systems. China on the other hand
has an authoritarian political system under the leadership of the Chinese
Communist Party. The term "communist" has become increasingly less
relevant in the Chinese context; legitimacy is based more on nationalism
and economic performance. The political spectrum is also broad when we
consider powers other than the United States, Japan, and China. Along
with the United States, Western powers such as Canada, Australia, and
New Zealand are based on liberal democratic principles. Unlike the United
States, these three states have parliamentary systems; Canada and Aus-
tralia are similar to the United States in being federal in nature.

A number of the states in both Northeast and Southeast Asia are based
on democratic principles; many have experienced democratization in recent

times. In Northeast Asia, South Korea and Taiwan (claimed by China) have undergone democratization since the late 1980s. The Russian Federation (present in the region through the Russian Far East) has moved toward democratization since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, but also retains some authoritarian features (some of which have strengthened under Vladimir Putin). In Southeast Asia the Philippines has followed a democratic model since independence in 1946, although martial law prevailed under President Ferdinand Marcos between 1972 and 1981, and patron-client relations have been a major feature of the system. In both Malaysia and Singapore the normal form of the political system has been democratic. In practice the Malay-dominated Barisan Nasional has ruled Malaysia. Under the People's Action Party Singapore has been essentially a one-party state. Indonesia's political system has passed through various phases. After a brief experience with parliamentary democracy in the early 1950s, it moved in an authoritarian direction under Sukarno's "guided democracy." Authoritarianism of a more anticommunist and promilitary orientation prevailed under Suharto's New Order beginning in 1965–1966. But following Suharto's fall in May 1998 Indonesia too has moved in the direction of democratization. This has brought to the fore a number of issues, such as the role of regions within Indonesia, the position of Islam, and the role of the military. Thailand, another Southeast Asian state dominated by the military, has been engaged in democratization since the early 1990s. Cambodia under "strong man" Hun Sen is democratic in form but also employs authoritarian practices. After a period of United Nations tutelage from 1999, East Timor achieved independence in 2002 on the basis of democratic institutions.

Apart from China, there are communist-oriented authoritarian governments in North Korea, Vietnam, and Laos. While there have been moves toward reform in Vietnam, North Korea remains as the world's sole remnant of Stalinism. Burma is the main instance of a military-dominated regime in the region, and Brunei is ruled by a sultanate.

As this survey makes clear it is necessary to look behind a state's proclaimed principles to see how it functions in practice. Usually there are particular groups that are advantaged and others that are disadvantaged within any political system. The degree of real competition can vary. In an authoritarian system a particular group attempts to preserve its privileged position by minimizing competition from potentially rival groups. Among the Pacific islands some states have verged on the brink of becoming "failed states." The major example is the Solomon Islands where ethnic rivalry brought the virtual breakdown of government and Australia led international intervention in 2003; Fiji also has faced issues relating to ethnic conflict although the impact has been less than in the Solomons. Papua New Guinea, too, has faced problems in achieving effective government, experiencing a

fragmented society and widespread corruption. Among the larger states of the region it is North Korea that has the greatest potential to fail. Indonesia is also facing severe problems in achieving a balance between democratization and effective government.

Economic Systems

In terms of economic systems most Asia Pacific countries are broadly capitalist, but that term allows for considerable diversity. Capitalism assumes that the private sector plays a central role in economic dynamics, but normally governments attempt to manage the environment in which that sector functions. Variation can occur at a number of levels. The private sector can encompass a range of large, middle-sized, and small organizations; the mix can vary from country to country. Even within a predominantly capitalist economy, government enterprises can play a key role in some situations. The direct involvement of governments in managing national economies can vary; some governments are more interventionist than others. Globalization means that the ability of governments to control economic developments within their respective borders has become more limited. Major economic powers can clearly have greater influence in these circumstances than smaller powers. Even where an economy is predominantly capitalist many people are engaged in a subsistence sector, simply producing enough food to meet their own requirements. People involved in a subsistence economy might concurrently have some involvement in the capitalist sector.

The two major economic powers of Asia Pacific are the United States and Japan; the United States has the world's largest GDP, Japan has the second largest. Both countries have advanced industrial economies, and the United States is also a major agricultural producer. The Japanese version of capitalism is much more controlled than the US version. The Japanese government acts to ensure the achievement of preferred social goals. A good example is in relation to agriculture. Japan restricts agricultural imports in order to protect rural society, even though this policy means much higher prices for Japanese consumers. Although the United States also has protective measures in place, in theory at least it is much more "free trade" in orientation.

Among the other industrial powers of the region the range in types of capitalism is similar to that between the United States and Japan. In Northeast Asia South Korea and Taiwan, two of the "newly industrializing countries" (NICs), are close to the Japanese model. Australia and Canada are closer to the United States in approach; both countries are also leading agricultural producers. New Zealand is a smaller version yet. China is an

emerging economic power, with a significant private sector, an extensive but contracting (and sluggish) state sector, and a large peasant-based subsistence economy.

In Southeast Asia Singapore has the most advanced economy (and the highest living standards), based largely on its role as a center for international finance and as a transshipment hub. Prior to the Asian economic crisis of 1997, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia experienced significant economic growth through the development of their manufacturing sectors. Traditionally these countries (and the Philippines) were exporters of agricultural produce (and minerals in some cases). All three were adversely affected by the economic crisis, with Indonesia most so. The newer members of ASEAN (Vietnam, Laos, Burma, Cambodia) and also newly independent East Timor have essentially Third World economies: large subsistence sectors, with primary produce as the main export earner. Brunei is a small oil-rich state. Vietnam and Laos have communist-style centralized economies, but with reforms enabling the private sector to play an increasingly important role. The main example of an unreformed communist command economy is outside Southeast Asia: North Korea. North Korea has experienced significant economic decline, including periods of famine.

Types of Societies

The types of societies in Asia Pacific display considerable variation. At one end of the spectrum are the advanced industrialized countries such as the United States, Japan, Canada, and Australia. These countries typically have small rural populations and are highly urbanized. Most people identify as middle class. Changes in the nature of manufacturing industry have meant the decline of the traditional working class. At the other end of the spectrum there are societies that might be described as Third World. They have large peasant populations, and small urban elites concentrated in cities that function as transport and administrative centers. The newer ASEAN members (Vietnam, Burma, Laos, Cambodia) typify this type of society. In the middle of the spectrum of societies we have several countries that have emerged or are emerging from Third World status to take on some of the characteristics of the advanced industrialized countries. Usually these countries will still have large peasant populations, but increasing urbanization is an important feature. The development of manufacturing industry encourages the emergence of a working class. Many people are attracted to the cities from the countryside, irrespective of whether they are engaged in manufacturing. An underclass of slum dwellers can develop. Probably China is the major example of this type of society, but the older ASEAN members (Indonesia,

Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines) have many of the characteristics indicated. South Korea and Taiwan have moved further in the direction of the advanced industrialized countries.

Ethnic divisions play a role in a number of Asia Pacific countries. As immigrant societies, the United States, Canada, and Australia have an important multicultural dimension. Immigration from Asian countries has played a role in this development; in the case of the United States an increasing proportion of the population is of Hispanic background (13.3 percent in 2002 according to the US Census Bureau).[14] New Zealand is sometimes described as bicultural, with about 80 percent of its population of European background, and the rest mainly Maori and other Pacific islanders. Japan is a relatively homogeneous society, with over 99 percent of the population ethnic Japanese (Koreans are the most significant minority). Korea (both North and South) is also ethnically homogeneous. China is more than 90 percent Han Chinese, but there are significant minorities such as the Muslims of the northwest, the Tibetans, the hill peoples of the southwest, the Mongolians, and the Manchu. Most Southeast Asian countries have important ethnic divisions. Ethnic Chinese are a significant minority throughout the region; ethnically Singapore is predominantly a Chinese city-state. Chinese are the largest minority in Malaysia (about one-third). Javanese are the single biggest ethnic group in Indonesia but there are many different ethnic groups throughout the archipelago. Divisions between Burmans and hill peoples are important in Burma. There is a similar, although less significant, division between Vietnamese and hill peoples in Vietnam. In the Philippines most people are of Malay background but there is a wide variety of languages spoken; the position of the Muslim peoples in the south represents one key division. In Thailand about three-quarters of the population are ethnically Thai, with Chinese as the most significant minority. Ethnic divisions also play a role throughout the Pacific islands region, most notably between Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians in Fiji, among the hundreds of tribal groupings in Papua New Guinea and among the island-based groups in Solomon Islands.

Cultures and Underlying Values

Ethnic divisions frequently involve differences in culture. Cultural diversity within Asia Pacific can be examined in terms of particular countries, as well as at a region-wide level. While culture can refer to the assumptions underlying how people live, here we will focus primarily on religious beliefs and worldviews. This approach directs us also to the underlying values governing the conduct of the various societies in the region. Asia Pacific includes

a number of the world civilizations or their representatives. Using Samuel Huntington's categories, the civilizations represented in Asia Pacific are Western, Sinic or Chinese, Japanese, and Islamic.[15] Hindu or Indian civilization is also an influence, and Orthodox Russian civilization might also be included in the case of the Russian Far East. While Huntington's approach is oversimplified in many respects, these categories do give us a starting point for reviewing the region's cultural diversity. It should not be assumed, however, that "diversity" necessarily results in clashes.

The United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand might be seen as national embodiments of Western civilization in the region. In the eastern Pacific, Western civilization is also an influence in Latin America (described by Huntington as either a separate civilization or a subcivilization of Western civilization). More broadly Western civilization has had an effect on most Asia Pacific countries both in the era of imperialism and more recently through the economic, technological, political, and cultural influence of Western powers (particularly the United States). Western civilization is based on the Judeo-Christian religious heritage. While religious beliefs remain important (most obviously in the United States), the Enlightenment also powerfully affected Western societies. The emphasis on science and rationality has had a secularizing effect. Although the practice can vary, the separation of church and state is the norm in the Western societies of Asia Pacific. The rule of law and institutions based on liberal democracy are also of great significance.

Certain of the civilizations identified by Huntington are based on China, Japan, and India. This does not mean that the influence of these civilizations is restricted to these countries alone. Chinese civilization has been an influence on neighboring countries such as Korea and Vietnam, and in the more distant past on Japan. Indian civilization has been an important influence in several Southeast Asian countries. Japan's cultural impact has been more limited although it was a colonial power in both Korea and Taiwan in the first part of the twentieth century; the Taiwanese are generally more positive about this experience than are the Koreans. These three nation-based civilizations involve a range of religions and worldviews: Confucianism and Taoism in China, Shintoism in Japan, and Hinduism and Buddhism in India. Each of these approaches is quite complex. A common feature is the way they attempt to integrate the whole of life, rather than thinking in terms of separate spheres. They are often conservative in the sense of upholding the existing order rather than encouraging questioning and change.

Another great civilization in Asia Pacific is Islam. Indonesia has more Muslims than any other country in the world. Muslims (mostly the indige-

nous Malays) are a majority in Malaysia. There are Muslim minorities in some Asia Pacific countries: the Philippines, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, and China. There are also many Muslims to be found in the Western countries of the region as a result of immigration (not to mention the Black Muslims in the United States). Like the other Asian civilizations Islam has an integrated approach whereby the basic principles of the religion are related to all areas of life, including politics. However, within Islam there is great diversity, not just in terms of the understanding of the underlying religious principles, but also in areas such as politics. Thus some Muslims in countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia wish to see the establishment of Islamic states, whereas others adhere to the more liberal view that Muslims need to accept pluralism and be tolerant of other views.

While diversity is certainly the dominant impression one has in any survey of the main features of contemporary Asia Pacific, there are also some unifying themes. The most notable are the dominance of democracy in the sphere of political organization and capitalism as a mode of economic organization. Clearly, however, there is a great range covered by each term, and there are instances that go against the norm. Asia Pacific does not gain its coherence from the dominance of certain political and economic norms within the region. As indicated earlier, a major factor in the development of the Asia Pacific concept has been that it legitimizes the involvement of the United States in East Asian affairs. This particular regional definition has therefore been promoted strongly by the United States. That this is a context where a number of major powers (United States, China, Japan) interact is significant. As a region Asia Pacific is also significant in terms of the world economy; in 2000 East Asia's share of world product was 26 percent, the United States 22 percent, and Western Europe 18 percent.[16] In global economic forums Asia Pacific countries generally favor greater liberalization (but not invariably); working together strengthens their bargaining power. Nevertheless regional organizations play a more limited role compared with a number of other regions of the world. Relatively speaking the international politics of Asia Pacific retains a strong emphasis on state-centered approaches.

■ Plan of the Book

A book on Asia Pacific in world politics, focusing specifically on the international politics of the region, can only deal with some aspects of the whole. At the end of the earlier defining sections on international politics and Asia Pacific I indicated the sense in which those terms are used in this

book. The focus is on particular aspects of Asia Pacific international politics, but without losing sight of the area's many other aspects. All that is claimed here is that the issues dealt with in subsequent chapters are important in themselves and highlight the dynamics of international politics in the region.

The underlying assumption is that to understand the dynamics of international politics in Asia Pacific, one needs to focus first on the interaction of states and, in particular, on the interaction of its major powers (United States, China, Japan). This point applies most strongly to Northeast Asia. In Southeast Asia the situation is more complex. There are more states involved, and they often have weak foundations; the major powers have an influence but they are less significant than in Northeast Asia. In Northeast Asia the significance of nonmajor powers, particularly the two Korean states and Taiwan, needs to be taken into account, as does Russia (still a major power in some respects, but of declining significance). A more comprehensive approach would take account of the role of Russia in Asia Pacific, as well as of the role of middle powers such as Australia and Canada. India, although not normally defined as an Asia Pacific power, can have an impact on the international politics of the region too. Considerations of space mean that not all of these actors can be examined in detail. They are referred to in the context of some issues, with Russia and Australia the subject for one chapter. Apart from the focus on the major powers in Northeast Asia, and on the more complex situation in Southeast Asia, there is some attention to the role of international organizations, both regional and global, as actors of growing importance for Asia Pacific international politics. While the most significant actors provide the structure of the book, the role of these actors is elaborated in relation to the issues of greatest significance in the region. This means a strong emphasis on security issues, of both the traditional political-military kind and the newer comprehensive approach, including human security. The new security issues are most obvious in Southeast Asia. A second emphasis is on the range of economic issues affecting international politics in the region. A third emphasis is on some of the issues in the "new international agenda," again most obviously in Southeast Asia, but also in the context of the role played by international organizations.

We begin in Part 1 with an examination of the roles of the United States, China, and Japan, the region's major powers, focusing on both the factors influencing their policies and the general approach they have adopted. The first point covers such factors as historical experience, ways governments have interpreted their roles, and domestic politics. The second point deals with political-strategic, economic, and other issues of concern

to the various powers in relation to their regional involvement. Having examined the main features of the roles of the United States, China, and Japan, we then focus on the ways these powers have interacted with each other. There are chapters on the relationships between Japan and the United States, China and the United States, and China and Japan. The major emphasis is post–Cold War but relevant background on the post-1945 context is also provided.

Part 2 turns to two of the key conflicts of the region: Taiwan and Korea. While the major powers are involved in these conflicts (China and the United States most obviously in relation to Taiwan, and all three in the case of Korea), there is also an attempt to highlight the significance of political developments in both Taiwan and the two Koreas.

Part 3 looks at Southeast Asia. Chapter 10 provides an overview of international politics in this subregion and highlights the often tenuous basis of the local states, while also drawing attention to the emergence of a number of new international issues such as unregulated people movements and HIV/AIDS. Chapter 11 is devoted to Indonesia as the most important of the Southeast Asian states and highlights the impact of domestic developments on Indonesia's international position.

Part 4 examines some of the other actors playing a role in Asia Pacific international politics. Chapter 12 focuses on the involvement of Russia and Australia in the region. Both states are on the edge of the region in some senses, while also aspiring to have an influence over developments affecting their own interests. Chapter 13 examines international organizations as yet another type of actor in the international politics of Asia Pacific. The underlying theme is the relationship between states and governmental international organizations, giving attention to the role of both regional and global organizations in the region. Southeast Asia's ASEAN is covered, as well as Asia Pacific and East Asia dimensions, and various organizations of the United Nations system are discussed.

Part 5, with its concluding chapter, suggests some of the themes that are emerging as leading aspects of international politics in Asia Pacific in the early twenty-first century. Based on the analysis presented I will consider whether major changes are occurring or are likely to occur in terms of the types and importance of actors and of key issues.

■ **Notes**

1. A useful overview of major theories of international politics is Burchill et al., *Theories of International Relations*.

2. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939;* Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations.*

3. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics.*

4. See in particular Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*.

5. See Held et al., *Global Transformations.*

6. Pye, *Asian Power and Politics,* p. 19. On the culturalistic argument, see also Kang, "Getting Asia Wrong."

7. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.*

8. On the impact of culture on international politics, see Solomon, "Political Culture and Diplomacy in the Twenty-first Century."

9. For a critical perspective, see Dirlik, ed., *What Is in a Rim?*

10. Buzan, "The Asia-Pacific," p. 84.

11. Useful historical texts include Murphey, *A History of Asia;* Mackerras, *Eastern Asia*. For a more contemporary focus, emphasizing the links between economics, society, and politics, see Tipton, *The Rise of Asia*. On the history of international politics in Asia Pacific, covering the Cold War and post–Cold War periods, see Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific*.

12. See Acharya, *The Quest for Identity,* pp. 18–29.

13. "Volunteers" was the term used by China for the forces it sent into the Korean War.

14. US Census Bureau, "The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 2002," (issued June 2003), www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/p20-545.pdf (accessed 14 September 2005).

15. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.*

16. Philip Dorsey Iglauer, "An Asia Pacific World," *Korea Times,* 21 April 2005, http://times.hankooki.com/lpage/opinion/200504/kt2005042116243854300 .htm (accessed 15 September 2005). The shares of world product in 1950 were: East Asia 10 percent, United States 27 percent, and Western Europe 18 percent.