



EDITORIAL

May 2001

In hindsight, the 1990s may be remembered as the most crucial decade in East Asian history since the Second World War. Once the economic powerhouse of the region, Japan stagnated miserably – the most recent White Paper from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry declares an end to Japan’s role as economic leader, and asserts that a new era of “competition” between Asian economies has commenced. China, the region’s ever-nascent superpower, recorded phenomenal rates of growth and became increasingly assertive in its relations with its neighbors and the United States. Yet, many questions remain about the sustainability of Chinese development and its widely criticized human rights record. The once venerated “Asian Miracle” turned sour in 1997-98, igniting a major global financial crisis and inviting humiliating intervention by the International Monetary Fund. The Asian Financial Crisis, however, also sowed the seeds for greater cooperation and integration within the region. The role of the United States, although still significant, appears to be in comparative decline.

In this inaugural issue of the Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs, we intend to present a broad overview of the issues facing East Asia today, as well as historical issues of significant interest. As a matter of policy, we believe that the traditional definition of East Asia as encompassing only China, Japan, and the Korean peninsula is grossly inadequate to the emerging realities of the region. Therefore, we have included a section covering “Greater East Asia,” incorporating Southeast Asia and perhaps the Russian Far East in future issues. Our imperative for creating this journal rests on our firm belief in the increasing importance of the region – politically, economically, and academically – as well as our desire to serve as a focal point for the abundant resources Stanford offers as the premier institution of East Asian Studies.

This journal is roughly divided into six main sections. Our Current Affairs section briefly summarizes recent developments worthy of mention. The Research section provides a more in-depth analysis of pertinent topics by our staff. In this issue, we investigate the role of Theater Missile Defense and the historical development of Chinese technology. The four remaining sections contain submitted works and interviews divided by region – China, Japan, Korea, and Greater East Asia.

China

The articles in this volume dealing with Chinese issues run the gamut from politics to health, Internet regulation to entrepreneurship. In his analysis of the U.S.-Chinese negotiations surrounding the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, William Chang argues that China’s concern with its international image is a crucial element in Chinese foreign policy. In many cases this concern overrides its otherwise realist norms of security as he notes in “China and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Negotiations.” Charles Baum questions the efficacy of the American tactic of using trade sanctions to enforce intellectual property rights in “Trade Sanctions and the Rule of Law.” While generally improving the status these rights hold in China, this tactic has been counterproductive in engendering genuine support for the rule of law. Philip Sohmen’s “Taming the Dragon” navigates the swiftly shifting labyrinth of Chinese Internet regulatory bodies to lay out the Chinese government’s strategy to promote the growth of the Internet while at the same time reining in politically objectionable content. There is not only tension in the divergent aims of the strategy, but also in its implementation by potentially adversarial regulatory bodies within the Chinese government. In their article on “The Development of Modern Entrepreneurship in China,” Debbie Liao and Philip Sohmen examine what it means to be an “entrepreneur,” how that definition has changed, and what causes led to that change. In “Long March, Bitter Fruit,” Peter Hansen evaluates both the positive and negative effects that rural to urban migration have wrought on the urban and rural landscape as well as the migrants themselves. These articles reflect the profound transformation China has undergone in the 1990s and shed light on many of the problems the

new leadership will face in the wake of the upcoming succession of Jiang Zemin in 2003.

Japan

The Japan section consists of two pieces, one dealing with recent problems in the Japanese economy and the other with a historical perspective on pre-WWII ethics. In "Japanese Entrepreneurship," Kenji Kushida examines the structural impediments facing entrepreneurs in the Japanese economy, drawing comparisons with the Silicon Valley model of the United States. He concludes that conditions previously conducive to rapid growth may be perpetuating incentives unfavorable to innovation, although gradual changes seem to be moving in the right direction. Jeffrey Wu examines the ethical convictions of Tetsuro Watsuji, an eminent wartime philosopher, in "The Philosophy of As-Is." Wu asserts that Watsuji's equation of moral goodness with the self-abnegation of the individual raises troubling questions about political ethics in the context of total war.

Korea

Since the historic summit between the divided Koreas, experts have raised many questions regarding issues such as the new Bush administration's foreign policy toward the peninsula, Kim Jong-il's recent visit to China and prospects of economic reform in the North, and South Korea's struggle with a "second" economic crisis. This issue features an interview with Dr. Suh Sang-Mok, former member of the Korean National Assembly and Hoover fellow, who shares his thoughts on these and other issues.

Greater East Asia

Economic integration in East Asia has been a keenly debated topic in the past few years, highlighted by recent global developments like the failure of WTO and APEC to make headway in further trade liberalization, closer economic integration in Europe and in North America, and a general feeling among the East Asian countries (after the experiences of the Asian financial crisis) that they need to be less beholden to Western institutions. Historically, there has always been a strong economic rationale for East Asian countries to be linked closer economically, but previous efforts at economic integration have always met with political obstacles, mainly U.S. opposition towards any proposals that would undermine its influence and interests in East Asia. Such U.S. opposition was recently demonstrated in its rejection of proposals for an East Asian Economic Group and for an Asian Monetary Fund. However, there have been some signs lately that East Asia is moving towards closer economic integration. These developments include the liberalizing of inter-ASEAN trade under the ASEAN Free Trade Area, the ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, South Korea) discussions, and an increasing number of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements involving countries in the Asia-Pacific. In "Prospects for Closer Economic Integration in East Asia," Wei Kiat Yip examines these issues in depth from a historical as well as analytical perspective.

The editors would like to express our sincere thanks to the untiring efforts of all of our staff as well as our faculty sponsors, the Center for East Asian Studies, the Associated Students of Stanford University, and all of those who contributed to making this endeavor possible. We look forward to making this the first of many issues to come.

The Editors