The US-Japan Relations: A Perspective from Conservative Internationalism — A Conversation with Dr. Henry R. Nau —

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Is America pivoting to Asia or out of the world? President Obama pursues a diplomacy that reserves the use of force as a last resort after diplomacy fails. Professor Nau discusses an armed diplomacy that uses force before and during not just after negotiations.

Based on his new book, he spells out a conservative rather than liberal internationalist approach to American diplomacy in Asia. What does it mean for trade with China, TPP, U.S. and Japanese economic recovery, and the global environment?
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His Major Works


2. Worldviews of Rising Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates in China, India, Iran, Japan, and Russia (Oxford Univ. Press, 2012)


8. Technology Transfer and U.S. Foreign Policy (Praeger, 1976)

Nau is interesting, provocative, and sometimes convincing when he looks for signs of conservative internationalism through the long sweep of U.S. history. His description of that school of thought alone makes this book worth reading.

Unlike realists, Nau argues, conservative internationalists accept the promotion of freedom as a legitimate goal of U.S. foreign policy. Unlike liberal internationalists, they believe that American power, rather than international institutions, offers the greatest hope for progress. They also believe in an aggressive combination of force and diplomacy to advance the American agenda worldwide, but they are less confident than either liberals or neoconservatives that a democratic utopia is just around the corner.
This is a valuable way of thinking about U.S. foreign policy for a post-Bush, post-Obama future. It will be interesting to see if any 2016 Republican.

Cf. Josef Joffe, *The Myth of America’s Decline*
(Liveright Publishing/W. W. Norton, 2013)