REMAPPING EAST ASIA

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A REGION

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Between Regionalism and Regionalization: Policy Networks and the Nascent East Asian Institutional Identity

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The chapters in this volume share a common interest in the material forces of firm-driven trade, investment, and production that are deepening economic integration in proximate parts of continental and maritime Asia.

The less-developed twin of this integration from the bottom up is the process of state-led institution building from the top down. Over the past decade, the institutional fabric of East Asia has become richer and more densely textured. On a bilateral basis, the number of summits and exchanges has increased substantially. And on a multilateral basis, an incipient regionalism has developed in three layers: formal governmental organizations including ASEAN, APEC, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and, more recently, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; various track II channels for dialogue on economic, political, security, environmental, and other transnational issues; and civil society–based activity involving actors such as NGOs, regional advocacy groups, and professional and business associations. "Although it is underdeveloped," observed a Korean academic, "regionalism in Asia is complicated enough" (Han 2002, 1).

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However complicated and innovative the new regionalism has been, the prevailing opinion inside and outside Asia is that regionalism is more talked about than acted upon and that the major intergovernmental institutions have lost momentum or stagnated. A recent review of ASEAN and APEC began with the question "Are the principal regional organizations in the East Asian and Asia-Pacific regions moribund or verging on it?" (Webber 2001, 340).

In contrast to the projects for building nation-states and national economies after the Second World War, the project for region building lacks a clear objective, a shared vision, and strong political support. Political leaders in East Asia express an awareness of regional developments and frequently float proposals for various kinds of joint projects and regional institutions. But they expend very little energy persuading domestic constituencies about the importance of these ideas and devote very few resources to their implementation.

The advocates of regionalism face a recurring conundrum. How do you create strong intergovernmental organizations in a context of exceptional diversity in which states are unwilling to transfer sovereignty to intergovernmental institutions, especially regional ones? The underlying premise of the "ASEAN Way" and its successor, the "Asia-Pacific Way," was that it is possible to have high levels of cooperation with low levels of institutionalization. Step-by-step incremental progress, a comfort level for all, consensus, and peer pressure were portrayed as superior to strong intergovernmental organizations with independent staffs and special expertise, rules, and enforcement mechanisms (Acharya 1997). The approach has proven unsuccessful in dealing with several recent problems, including the economic crisis, East Timor, and the haze problem, bringing into question the effectiveness of regional institutions. When swift action is needed on a regional issue in Southeast or Northeast Asia, the instruments and actors have almost always included extra-regional players, especially but not exclusively the United States.

If *regionalization* is the expression of increased commercial and human transactions in a defined geographical space, *regionalism* is the expression of a common sense of identity and destiny combined with the creation of institutions that express that identity and shape collective action. Caught between aspirations for building multilateral cooperation and political realities constraining it, regionalism in East Asia often takes hybrid forms that frequently blur the distinction between governmental and nongovernmental. In this context, the multiple forms of track II dialogues have special meaning. As agents of what Anthony Milner has called "a relentless conversation," they are playing essential roles in providing the rationale for regionalism, finding a consensus among policy elites for moving regionalism forward, and shaping the governmental institutions that aim to make regionalism effective.

in 1996 in the ASEAN-led Asian component of preparations for the Asia–Europe Summit (ASEM) process (Terada 2003). The definition of the region that includes the members of ASEAN plus China, Japan, and South Korea and excludes North America, Australia and New Zealand, and South Asia, has been contested but has proven durable and underwrites most of the contemporary initiatives promoting East Asian regionalism.

What explains the new interest in creating deeper cooperation on an *East Asian* basis? Most accounts begin with the deepening economic interactions that followed the Plaza Accord in 1985 and emphasize the material and psychological consequences of the economic crisis that began in 1997. Fred Bergsten argues that the advocates of East Asian regionalism are "motivated by a large number of factors in moving toward creating their own institutional identity," with part of the motivation "defensive and reactive while part is positive and even visionary" (Bergsten 2001, 7).

The arguments in favor of East Asian regionalism normally fall into one of three categories, which Simon Tay has conveniently identified as function, identity, and geopolitical weight (Tay 2002, 104). The first argues for regionalism as a means of deepening functional cooperation to manage an increasingly interdependent regional economy and the political forces that accompany it.[3] A number of economists inside and outside East Asia have stressed the virtues of regional cooperation in areas such as trade facilitation and financial monitoring and surveillance (Dobson 2001; Pacific Economic Cooperation Council [PECC] 2002). In the eyes of many Asian economists, the mistakes that produced and, to some, amplified the economic crisis of 1997 should never again be allowed to reoccur. And a variety of business analysts not only see the increase in intra-regional trade but also endorse it to fuel future export growth. On a political level, functionalist arguments have taken several turns, one of them being that an East Asian process can go beyond ASEAN and APEC in establishing deeper societal involvement; in fostering developmental objectives related to poverty, illiteracy, equity, and social justice; and, most simply, in dealing with transnational problems that need concerted regional action. Other variants are that East Asian regionalism can revitalize a sagging ASEAN (Wanandi 1999), reposition ASEAN as the hinge of a balanced set of interregional institutions including ASEM, APEC, and Latin America (Soesastro 2001), and provide "new diplomatic glue" for Northeast Asia (Alatas 2001).

3. Although economists are persuaded that interactions within East Asia are increasing, they differ on whether the level of dependence and interdependence with countries outside East Asia, especially the United States, is decreasing. Every East Asian country except Japan does at least half of its trading with other countries in East Asia (and the percentage is rising), yet the United States remains the principal economic partner for most. A BRIE team states the case even more strongly: "the overwhelming direction of the principal axes of interaction . . . go[es] the wrong way: From one Asian nation after another, they run not to other Asian nations but to the United States" (Cohen 2002, 7).

This chapter considers both governmental (especially ASEAN + 3 [APT][1]) and nongovernmental initiatives to promote regionalism. Although some see East Asian regionalism as a competitor to an American-centered set of arrangements, I argue that the thrust of most of the track II processes is to find ways to make them compatible, at least in the short and medium term.

East Asian Regionalism and the APT

As T. J. Pempel outlines in his introductory chapter, the twentieth century spawned several attempts to create intra-Asian regionalism. Doing so on an East Asian basis has precedents in the Chinese imperial system and the Japanese-led Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere of the 1930s. It is a major conceptual and political leap to connect what in the postwar period has been seen as the separate regions of Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia. The current formulation of "East Asia" has its material foundations in the changing pattern of production, trade, and investment commencing in the mid-1980s after the Plaza Accord.[2] In 1990 Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia first advocated an East Asian economic grouping. Although the proposal met heavy resistance across the Pacific in North America and Australia and in several parts of Asia, it echoed in regional discussions throughout the 1990s, becoming, in the words of Lee Kuan Yew, "an idea that would not go away." The basic thrust of the proposal, minus the anti-Western rhetoric, was channeled into the East Asia Economic Caucus within APEC and then reappeared

1. I've chosen the phrase ASEAN + 3, and the acronym APT, mainly for the aesthetic symmetry with ASEAN and APEC. A characteristic feature of Asia Pacific institutions is that the names are often awkward (Asia-Pacific mixes continents and oceans), seldom complete (consider Gareth Evans's famous quip about APEC being four adjectives in search of a noun), and eternally contested (should Asia Pacific have a hyphen?). What I am calling APT is presented in most official forums as ASEAN + 3 and by other analysts in combinations that include ASEAN 10 + 3, 10 + 3, and, for the cheekier, 3 + 10. Sometimes this represents confusion, but there is also a hidden codethat using the numbers rather than letters signifies that the real unit of analysis is individual states rather than ASEAN as an organization. The term 3 + 10 highlights the role of the Northeast Asian three in providing the resources and primary initiative for the process.

2. For those educated in North America under the influence of John Fairbank and Edwin Reischauer or their students, the concept of East Asia in the APT context is very different from the idea of East Asia as the Sinic or Confucian culture area. American ideas about defining Southeast Asia have had a major impact inside Southeast Asia itself, but this has not been the case with the idea of East Asia. I speculate that much of the discussion of naming has been driven by English-speaking Southeast Asians (especially in Singapore) who were educated either in Europe or outside of Harvard. Key individuals from Japan, China, and South Korea were aware of the Sinic underpinnings of "East Asia" Harvard-style and redefined it to be more acceptable to their Southeast Asian colleagues worried about any return to Middle Kingdomism and Chinese hegemony. The Fairbank and Reischauer conception based on civilizational and cultural commonalities plus hierarchy has thus given way to a definition based on interactions and nominal equality forged within the region itself (Evans 2000).

The second sees regionalism as a reflection and amplifier of an underlying regional identity or consciousness. This takes several forms. One is that there are common Asian aspirations and, for some, values that can unify the region and give it a distinctive character. The commonality of identity can take positive or negative forms. Simon Tay looks toward a new East Asia that can provide the space for a new generation of cosmopolitan Asians (Tay 2002, 103). Others see the commonality as the "feeling of humiliation shared by many East Asian countries" after the economic crisis (Kikuchi 2002, 17), the "politics of resentment" that came in its wake (Higgott 1998a; Bowles 2002), or, with a materialist twist, the preservation of a distinctive form of capitalism in the face of outside pressure (Stubbs 2002).[4]

The third argument for regionalism is as a collective call to action for increasing East Asian weight in the world and, at least to some, counterbalancing the influence of the United States. Fred Bergsten points to the Asian desire to reduce excessive dependence on outside institutions, especially "the IFI's based in Washington, the authorities of the United States, and the private (predominantly Anglo-Saxon) markets that took their cues from both" (Bergsten 2000, 3). In part, this is an insurance policy in the event that the global trading system deteriorates or regional blocs in Europe and North America become more protectionist and assertive. Put in more positive form, there is the argument that East Asia needs to have a stronger voice in global institutions, including the WTO and the international financial institutions. The other side of the coin is the view that a stronger East Asia is necessary to defend Asian economic and security interests in an era of rising American power and to prepare the way for a more mature and self-regarding regional formation (Higgott 1998a).

Structures and Proposals

Although the APT aspires to play the central role in promoting East Asian regionalism, it is just one element of a much wider set of activities that have been developing since 1997 on an East Asian basis.[5] On the monetary and financial side, they include the Miyazawa Initiative of October 1998 for bilateral (as compared with regional) swap arrangements with Malaysia and South Korea; sustained support within several governments for the creation of some

4. Richard Stubbs has described this as "a form of capitalism that is quite distinct from either European or North American forms of capitalism. The East Asian form of capitalism, which is increasingly found in the APT countries, is rooted in business networks—both Japanese and ethnic Chinese networks—and is characterized by strong state-business links. It emphasizes production rather than consumption, and results rather than ideology, and tends to place a premium on market share as opposed to short-term profits. East Asian capitalism is also based much more on social obligation and social trust than the rule of law" (Stubbs 2002, 7).

5. These are in addition to the plethora of proposals for what in this context can be identified as separate "subregional" activities within Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia.

kind of Asian Monetary Fund; the Chiang Mai Initiative to create a regional arrangement for orchestrating currency swaps at moments of crisis; monetary cooperation through the Network of Bilateral Swap Arrangements; the Manila Framework Group focused on early warning mechanisms; regular meetings of groups such as the executives of East Asian and Pacific Central Banks (see Dobson 2001; Ravenhill 2002); and recent attempts to create an Asian bond market (Asian Development Bank 2003).

On the trade side, there have been numerous proposals for new arrangements on a bilateral and regional basis. Most significant are the proposal for a China–ASEAN free trade area and the organization of an ASEAN–China Trade Negotiating Committee to create a framework for implementation; the proposal by Prime Minister Koizumi for a Japan–ASEAN comprehensive economic partnership and the creation of an experts' group to examine implementation; proposals for a 10 + 3 free trade area as exemplified in the report of the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG); a proposal for a regional free trade area that would also include Taiwan; and the welter of proposals and negotiations for bilateral "free trade" or "economic partnerships," including examples such Singapore–Japan (Ravenhill 2003).

The ASEAN + 3 Process

APT is the most ambitious and comprehensive of the governmental efforts to create an institutional framework to support East Asian regionalism. Although only five years old, it is "generating a buzz" (Wain 2000, 4), according to journalists, and academics have claimed that it "now has the potential to become the dominant regional institution in East Asia" (Stubbs 2002, 441).[6] It appears to have high-level political support, as seen in the regular summits of heads of state, and combines procedural modesty with far-reaching ambitions. None of its proponents live or die on the basis of APT's success. Almost all have a realistic sense of proportion about its current prospects and capabilities and support it as nothing more than one pillar of the regional institutional architecture. Yet although APT is a call for economic cooperation, it is also in some minds a search for a new identity or, more precisely, elements of a new identity. As an institution, APT, like APEC before it, has the double burden of promoting pragmatic, interest-based cooperation at the

6. There is a small but well-informed and lively literature on the APT process and the broader theme of East Asian regionalism. For example, there is a debate between political economists and neo-classical economists about whether the principal motivation is East Asia defending a particular form of capitalism (Bowles 2002; Stubbs 2002) or, alternatively, adjusting to universal market realities in a new way (Dobson 2001). Beyond differences born of national perspective and personal temperament, there seem to be continental divisions on the significance of the process. Europeans tend to see it destined for failure until it takes the inevitable turn to supra-national institutionalization. North Americans sometimes share the skepticism but are not as consistent or demanding in spelling out prescriptions. Australians are skeptical but want in.

same time as building the rationale and instruments for deeper integration structured on some kind of "community" basis.

APT can be categorized as a consultative process involving thirteen governments. Its operational definition was inherited from the ASEAN-led effort to create a process for Asian consultation in advance of the ASEM. The ASEAN 10 (nine initially) were joined by the three most important economies in Northeast Asia, with Taiwan excluded for explicitly political reasons.

Most of the bureaucrats in individual ministries around the region handle APT issues in a broader portfolio that includes APEC, ASEM, and the associated track II activities. APT does not yet have a permanent secretariat or facility, although the ASEAN secretariat provides some element of coordination and the Malaysian government has been promoting Kuala Lumpur as the site of a new APT secretariat, offering US$10 million to establish the facility (Abdullah 2002). It currently functions as a rolling series of meetings at three levels. The first involves the heads of government and has included annual leaders' meetings (Kuala Lumpur, December 1997; Hanoi, November 1998; Manila, November 1999; Singapore, November 2000; Brunei, November 2001; Phnom Penh, November 2002). The second involves ministerial-level meetings of economic and finance ministers. The third involves senior officials from ministries and agencies, including patent offices, science and technology, and working groups. In addition, APT has commissioned various nongovernmental study groups, including the EAVG, and others looking at regionwide monetary integration and free trade. Although significant, activity at the governmental or track II level pales in comparison with that of the better-developed APEC process, with its working groups, meetings, and network of study centers.

The many obstacles to APT success and progress are frequently recited. The diversity of cultures, political and economic systems, and levels of development is only slightly less than in APEC. Unlike the EU, in APT there is no common aspiration to democracy, and there are enormous variations in administrative, technocratic, and intellectual capacity among the participating states, with little chance that these inequalities will be addressed or resolved in the near future. The inherent asymmetry between the economic clout of ASEAN and the Northeast Asian three is considerable, with the combined GDP of the latter some nine times higher than the former. On the political side, there is no single country capable of or, arguably, interested in leading the process. Indeed, it appears that APT can move forward only if no single state is seen as playing the dominant role. The reaction of Washington is also important, with most arguing that strong opposition to the APT, as in the case of the East Asian Economic Grouping and Asian Monetary Fund, would slow or stop its development. Others convinced that APT is essentially about economic cooperation believe that it will gradually disappear if the world trading system moves forward. Even its strongest boosters are modest

about its significance and role. Han Sung-Joo, chair of the EAVG, predicted that "the process will go on, but a slow but steady pace" (Han 2002, 7).

Ranged against this APT skepticism is the widespread view that East Asia is an idea whose time has come. As phrased in the EAVG report, "While the pace of building an East Asian community is uncertain, the direction is clear and the trend currently underway is irreversible" (EAVG 2001, x). Several leaders are calling for the transformation of APT into an East Asian summit process, thus moving toward a new regional structure rather than just regional cooperation. "It is shameful," claims the Malaysian prime minister, "that the countries of East Asia have to hide behind other names like ASEAN plus Three in order for them to get together" (Mahathir 2002, para. 32).

Nongovernmental Policy Networks

The APT is a formal governmental process, and its main proponents have been national leaders, chief among them Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad in Malaysia and, at an earlier point, then president Kim Dae-jung in South Korea.[7] There was no formal track II process organized on an East Asian basis preceding the APT, because the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) preceded APEC and the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP) preceded the ARF. And the APT was initiated by government officials largely insulated and removed from expert groups. NGOs and the private sector (excepting Japanese, Korean, and Chinese trade associations interested in doing business in other parts of East Asia) have shown little interest in the process.

It is thus tempting to treat APT as a state-driven process playing catch-up with the on-the-ground economic realities of regionalization. It is similarly tempting to treat APT as the reflection of state interests in which national governments have defined the agenda, direction, and pace of East Asian regionalism, with the outside policy experts left to find a rationale and fill in the blanks. The reality is more complicated.

The APT claims the energies and imaginations of probably no more than five or six hundred people. Their interactions represent the connection between bottom-up (recognizing that "the bottom" comprises sophisticated societal elites) and top-down processes. Here there has been considerable activity and advocacy initiated by a shifting but coherent group of individuals and institutes in Asia and including some in Europe, Australasia, and North America. What role have nongovernmental and track II processes played in

7. Only Mahathir has provided consistent support for East Asian regionalism for more than a decade and made it a policy priority, as seen, for example, in the rejection of bilateral free trade agreements on the grounds that they will weaken ASEAN and a broader process like APT (Ravenhill 2003, 304).

the emergence of East Asian regionalism? And what have been the major debates inside them? Who are the actors? How are they connected?

Conceptualizing and categorizing these "nongovernmental" actors is a tricky enterprise. The idea of "epistemic communities" has the advantage of focusing on idea-based groups operating transnationally. The groups operating in Asia often do appear to share a set of normative and principled beliefs, a value-based rationale for their actions, a common policy enterprise, and similar discursive practices. But they rarely meet the exacting conditions of shared causal beliefs and shared notions of validity (Haas 1992, 3). Some of these groups do fit this more demanding definition, among them advocacy groups concerned with environmental, human rights, and nonproliferation issues as well as some of the economists, business groups (e.g., Pacific Asia Free Trade and Development Conference and Pacific Basin Economic Council), and professional associations. Yet the institutionalized track II processes, including PECC and CSCAP, function more as brokerage than advocacy groups. They reach consensus only at fairly high levels of abstraction and focus on building processes for exchange among policy elites on a range of issues without an agreed set of preferred policy outcomes.

More helpful, though less precise, is John Ruggie's idea of an episteme, adapted from Michel Foucault, which refers to a "dominant way of looking at social reality, a set of shared symbols and references, mutual expectations and a mutual predictability of intention" (Ruggie 1975, 569–70). If the episteme is treated as a process rather than a starting point, it accurately captures the evolutionary dialogue activities that are bringing together individuals from very different national settings who hold very different ideas and then move toward a kind of consensual knowledge that they hold in common.

Richard Higgott uses the ideas of policy networks and policy communities. A policy network is "constituted by its membership . . . and the linkages that structure interaction" (Higgott 1994, 373). A policy community is a more formalized relationship "characterized by the identification of an emerging set of institutionalized relations between non-governmental and governmental members of a policy network to facilitate policymaking and policy implementation" (373). Writing in 1994, he concluded that there were several policy networks in operation but that they had not yet reached the stage of policy communities.

Whether described as policy networks or epistemic communities (in the relaxed sense of the term), the groups promoting East Asian regionalism have several defining characteristics. With the single exception of the definition of the region (East Asia, not Asia Pacific), these are strikingly similar to the operation of policy networks in the broader Asia Pacific setting.

1. They primarily aspire to influence government decision making, usually at a national level and occasionally at the regional and global levels. In most minds

the objective is to influence governments rather than create a transnational civil society separate from them.

2. They are close to government in several ways. Governments often fund them, shape the agendas, select or influence the selection of participants, lend their prestige to the individuals from their countries, and are the principal targets of the policy advice emerging from discussions. The distinction between governmental and nongovernmental players is often blurred, with officials participating in various track II activities in their private capacities and, in several countries, with today's official becoming tomorrow's "outside expert," and the reverse. This produces some complex terminology: "unofficial but not nongovernmental," "quasi-governmental," "semi-governmental." The vocabulary of track I and track II is revealing not only because it accurately portrays the two processes as at least tending in the same direction but because it has now been refined and expanded to include "track 1.5," "track 1.25," and so forth, as well as the new "track III" (Capie and Evans 2002).
3. Although some of the participants can be considered "experts" on the basis of education and professional standing, especially among the economists who come close to having the theoretical consistency and standards that are the foundations for an epistemic community, most are generalists, some but not all with advanced education outside Asia in institutions in North America, Europe, and Australasia. If there are commonalities of opinion and outlook, they are as much a product of interaction in the incessant parade of meetings as they are of earlier upbringing or shared scientific training. This raises the possibility that there is indeed a core group of regionalists, veterans of years and in some cases decades of constant interaction in regional forums, creating a perspective different from their national ones. If and as this happens, networks can become communities. T. J. Pempel's observation that Asian elites have in the past been more likely to meet on American campuses than in Asia is no longer true: contemporary regionalists tend to congregate in Asian hotels around the hollow squares that host regional experts' groups or dialogues.[8]
4. The commonalities lie in the ability to operate in English (the working language of both East Asian and Asia Pacific regionalism) and in knowledge of regional issues as well as the policy context of their domestic settings. Digging deeper, there is usually a common commitment to internationalism, rationalism, and economic liberalism.[9]

Where and how have these policy networks or epistemic communities connected with East Asia? They fall into three categories. The first is processes that have been generated in an Asia Pacific context; the second in the context of

8. The Dialogue and Research Monitor (http://www.jcie.or.jp/drm/index.html) chronicles almost six hundred multilateral meetings on security matters alone in the period 1994–2002.

9. In outlook and worldview, there are a variety of similarities to the views analyzed in Tomoko Akami's thoughtful dissection of the main lines of thinking in the Institute of Pacific Relations in the 1920s and 1930s. The principal differences are the wider range of national perspectives and the almost unanimous support of market mechanisms and more liberalized trade in the contemporary discourse (Akami 2002; Woods 1993).

the Asia–Europe meetings; and the third in the context of state-sponsored and initiated processes within East Asia itself.

It is ironic that many of the formative discussions about East Asia have taken place in dialogue settings established with a different understanding of the geographical footprint of the "region for cooperation." The objectives and modalities of an East Asian regional grouping have been part of discussions in the context of APEC and around the margins of ASEAN meetings. At the track II or nongovernmental level, the idea of East Asia received extensive attention in dozens of meetings nominally organized on an Asia Pacific basis, including such annual events as the Asia-Pacific Roundtable in Kuala Lumpur.[10] The Asia Pacific Agenda Project organized by the Japan Center for International Exchange is instructive in that the vocabulary is Asia Pacific but the agenda and participants are heavily East Asian focused. At the annual meetings in Cebu in 2001 and Siem Reap in 2002, roughly only five of eighty participants came from outside East Asia.

Not all Asia Pacific dialogue channels are sympathetic to the arguments for East Asian regionalism, even when it is presented as compatible with and supportive of Asia Pacific institution building.[11] Some of the non-Asian participants are wary of any form of activity that will potentially compete with global multilateralism in the form of the WTO or the international financial institutions, and they are concerned about the political implications of "drawing a line in the Pacific." Some of the Asian participants do not see any need for an explicitly East Asian formulation, either because it has the potential to undercut ASEAN coherence or because it risks reducing American involvement in the region.

Yet most of the participants in Asia Pacific processes are either supportive or neutral concerning the creation of a separate East Asian process. And tellingly, many of the strongest Asian proponents of ASEAN, APEC, the ARF, and the attendant track II processes are also active proponents of East Asian regionalism and the APT.[12]

The ASEM process and its attendant track II process, the Council for Asia Europe Cooperation, were explicitly fashioned as "intercivilizational dialogues" and have provided multiple opportunities for the Asian participants

10. The use of a hyphen with the term Asia-Pacific was often code for defining the region on the basis of East Asia but including participants from other places (e.g., North America, Australia, Europe) in the discussions. For some, East Asia has always been the unspoken center of Asia-Pacific.

11. This becomes even more evident if we take into account the fact that policy makers in most Asian countries tend to see bilateral relations as more important to their immediate futures than any form of incipient multilateralism. See the study of Japan by Okawara and Katzenstein (2001).

12. Individuals who have supported Asia Pacific and East Asian institution building include Narongchai Akrasanee, Chia Siow Yue, Jesus Estanislao, Han Sung-Joo, Mohamed Jawhar Hassan, Carolina Hernandez, Hadi Soesastro, Noordin Sopiee, Tanaka Akihiko, Simon Tay, Jusuf Wanandi, Tadashi Yamamoto, and Zhang Yunling.

(defined operationally as East Asia) to meet regularly and with the intention of creating an "Asian" perspective or agenda. They have been acknowledged as the impetus for the current version of the idea of Asians meeting with Asians. This was a very rare occurrence in the four decades after the demise of the intra-Asian conferences in the mid-1950s, including the Bandung Conference in 1955.

On an explicitly East Asian basis, several channels for discussion have been created since 1997. There are a variety of experts' groups, involving research institutes from key countries, meeting bilaterally and regionally to look at issues including free trade arrangements. Several institutes in Asia, among them the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore, the Korean Institute for Economic Policy, the ASEAN Institutes for Strategic and International Studies, the Nomura Research Institute, the institutes connected with METI in Japan, and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, have organized intra-Asian meetings on a bilateral and regional basis in the past five years, with East Asian regionalism and the APT process as main agenda items. The Boao Forum in Hainan and other explicitly "Asian" meetings (note that Australia is considered an integral part of East Asia for the purposes of the Boao meeting) are expanding in number, the most recent addition being the Asian Cooperation Dialogue led by the Thai prime minister and involving mainly foreign ministers from the APT countries (except for Myanmar) as well as Bahrain, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Qatar.

The most intensive and comprehensive of these nongovernmental processes has been the East Asia Vision Group. Created in response to a proposal by then president Kim Dae-jung and chaired by Han Sung-Joo, a Korean academic who had served as foreign minister and later became ambassador to the United States, the EAVG consisted of two nongovernmental representatives selected by each of the thirteen countries in the APT. It held five meetings between the summer of 1999 and November 2001, when it delivered its report to the meeting of the thirteen heads of government in Brunei. It was tasked to deliberate on the ultimate goals of East Asian cooperation, how these goals could be achieved, and what institutional framework is required.

The final report staked out an ambitious objective: "We have reached a consensus that we should envision East Asia as evolving from a region of nations to a bona fide regional community, a community aimed at working toward peace, prosperity and progress. We are agreed on the necessity of such cooperation in all aspects of society." It then outlined more than seventy proposals for expanding cooperation in these areas, perhaps the most significant being the creation of an East Asian free trade area, expansion of the framework agreement on an ASEAN investment area, establishment of a self-help regional facility for financial cooperation, strengthening of the regional monitoring and surveillance process in East Asia, a focus on poverty alleviation, promotion of regional identity and consciousness, evolution of the annual

APT summits into an East Asian summit, and establishment of a nongovernmental East Asia forum to serve as the institutional mechanism for broad-based social exchanges.

The report did not define the ingredients of community except in abstract terms ("shared challenges, common aspirations and a parallel destiny") and did not mention the concepts of democracy, supra-national institutions, or civil society. Economics as the catalyst and the value of trust and understanding are familiar refrains in regional discussions. And although the report was state-centric, it also alluded to the need to go "beyond government efforts to involve the broader society and the people of the region." It went further than most of the APEC and ASEAN discourse in explicitly mentioning the value of NGOs, especially in the context of environmental issues, and in using ideas like "cooperative security," "human security," and "good governance." Although emphasizing the value of liberalization, market openness, and globalization, it supported a broader agenda that included poverty alleviation, developmental assistance, social justice, and equity.

The EAVG report was presented to the APT Summit in November 2001 and then referred to the East Asia Study Group (EASG), composed of senior officials, which was tasked to come up with concrete action. In its own analysis of the EAVG's fifty-seven recommendations, the EASG identified seventeen "implementable measures with high priority" and nine additional measures for medium- or long-term study, and it dropped thirty-one from further consideration. It deferred for later consideration the EAVG's principal recommendations of a free trade and investment area, a regional financing facility, coordination of exchange rates, NGO consultations, and the creation of an East Asian (as compared with an APT) summit. Reflecting the sometimes ephemeral nature of East Asian regionalism, the EAVG and EASG reports have been discussed in various dialogue meetings and among senior governmental officials but have attracted virtually no public attention.

Debating Regionalism

Within the EAVG and other nongovernmental discussion forums, a variety of fundamental issues have been debated. The debates, frequently more interesting than the reports and statements emanating from the meetings, center on five main issues.

The first is the definition of East Asia and the ensuing arguments about its geographic footprint and membership in a potential East Asian institution. There have been several proposals for including more countries in the APT process, with candidates including North Korea, Mongolia, India and Pakistan, and Australia and New Zealand. Whatever the political calculations involved, the underlying question is whether East Asia should be defined geographically (with accompanying criteria of historical experiences, common

values, or civilizational perspectives) or functionally based on contemporary interactions and interests.

In one flexible formulation reminiscent of the earlier definition of Southeast Asia as "south of China and east of India," East Asia has been coyly defined as "larger than Southeast Asia but smaller than all of Asia" (Tay 2002, 99). Another suggestion from a Japanese scholar active in PECC and CSCAP is that "'East Asia' is more a functional concept than a geographical one. . . . Its geographical scope may be expanded or narrowed, depending upon the intensity of interactions in a specific issues area. So there is no need for the membership of the ASEAN + 3 forum to be fixed. . . . Such countries as the United States are essential parts of 'East Asia' given their political, security and economic roles" (Kikuchi 2002, 16).

The functional argument is inspired by a pragmatic and materialist commitment to solving practical problems and sidestepping the thorny issues of history, values, and identity. And it steps around accusations that the definition of the region as proposed by some follows racially defined boundaries. But it begs the question of why any new institutional arrangement is necessary, considering the existence of APEC and a range of other institutions facilitating functional economic cooperation.

The values/culture perspective comes in two variants. One can be summarized as the "Asian values" school, which focuses on distinctive characteristics emerging from East Asia's history. In the EAVG report, for example, East Asia is identified as "a distinctive and crucial region in the world" with "geographical proximity, many common historical experiences, and similar cultural norms and values." In the section of the report on cultural and educational programs, a paragraph "urges governments of the region to work together with their respective cultural and educational institutions to promote a strong sense of regional identity and an East Asian consciousness" (EAVG 2001, 98). It is telling that in the EAVG report, the geographical boundaries are assumed rather than stated, and no examples are given of common historical experiences, cultural norms, and values. Tommy Koh, Mahathir bin Mohamad, and others have provided detailed accounts of the "Asian values" that some feel to be the implicit core of an East Asian identity.

The second variant can be identified as the "cosmopolitan culture school." Yoichi Funabashi and others have made the case for an Asian consciousness and identity (Funabashi 1993). But rather than looking for it in history and values, they ascribe it to distinctive responses to universal processes such as globalization. Simon Tay, a Singaporean academic, makes the revisionist case that "Asia has no strong and enduring history of unity and accepted commonality, whether in polity, culture, language or religion." Rather than endorse a state-centered discourse of Asian values, he looks for commonalities in culture based on the interaction of peoples responding to modernity:

> The new Asian culture will therefore not be found in a museum of Confucian analects or the speeches of octogenarian party cadres. It will instead be seen in the streets of Shanghai, Shibuya in Tokyo, and Singapore. My guess is that emerging with influences of J-pop, films by Ang Lee and others, and California roll sushi. It will grow as new Asians meet and communicate their similarities, differences and interdependencies. And, in all likelihood, they will do so in English, with their own particular accents. . . . It should not be the job of politicians in the region to stir Asian nationalism or to find some new excuse for their differences. The task will be to keep up with the trends, and prepare the institutions—economic, social, cultural and political—to give space to the cosmopolitan generation of Asians that is emerging. (Tay 2002, 104)

The idea of an "identity without exceptionalism" (Acharya 2001b) has proven very attractive to younger-generation liberals in many of the dialogue channels, although less compelling to their seniors.

The second debate centers on how comprehensive cooperation should be at this point. The case for various forms of financial and monetary cooperation is compelling. And there also seems to be consensus that the broader dimensions of cooperation, including developmental assistance, should be part of the agenda. The debate centers on how far political and security matters should be included. As seen in the EAVG report, the areas of "nontraditional" and human security have been increasingly important in intra-regional meetings. On the topic of "hard" security, including military doctrines, force deployments, arms control, and the like, most governments have tried to steer clear of detailed discussion in the absence of an American presence, citing the existence of security-specific forums such as the ARF, although rarely addressing them in depth in the ARF or any formal multilateral context. A few Chinese and Southeast Asian participants have argued that hard security matters should soon be featured more prominently, but at this point there is no mention of a longer-term move toward some kind of an *East Asian* security community, much less collective defense or collective security arrangements.

Third is the nature of the institutional structure that needs to be created. Not surprisingly, nongovernmental forums make the case for creating a parallel track II process (e.g., PECC and CSCAP) to what emerges at the formal governmental level. The contentious issue is how to give any East Asian institution teeth. Although APT is constructed as a consultative forum, it is already delving into areas that in due course will demand sophisticated policy coordination, adjudication, and enforcement mechanisms.

There is not yet a coherent answer about how to solve the institutionalization dilemma. The EAVG, for example, did nothing more than recommend establishing a parallel track II process, the East Asia Forum, and regularizing the APT summits as East Asian summits. It recommended "progressive institutionalization," acknowledging that "organizational capacity is crucial for effective formulation and implementation of programs" without providing any kind of sketch

of what that institutionalization should look like. Other forums have produced a myriad of suggestions. Some have called for the restructuring of the APT along the lines of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, with a central administrative mechanism possessing some kind of permanent expertise (Dobson 2001, 1014). Jusuf Wanandi and several others have suggested that APT revisit European models of community building. And others have indicated that the idea of unanimity and consensus be replaced or supplemented by "coalitions of the willing" within the APT. One recommendation under active consideration is that APT employ a "sherpa system" of the kind used by the G7. A consensus has not been reached on how to proceed, but there is widespread acknowledgment that reliance on voluntarism, peer pressure, consensus, and avoidance of activist regional secretariats independent of national control is no longer a useful model but rather a hindrance.

The fourth is about leadership. Who, or more precisely, how, will the new process be led? From the perspective of interstate dynamics, it is clear that the balance of economic and political power lies in Northeast Asia. Southeast Asia has not shown the collective capacity for leadership that it did before the economic crisis. China and Japan are the natural leaders of East Asia, but for widely accepted reasons neither has the capacity to play such a role or the support from others in the region to do so (Stubbs 2002; Webber 2001). In this situation, South Korea along with individual Southeast Asian governments, especially those of Singapore and Malaysia, have played a middle power role in moving the process forward.

The leadership issue also relates to nonstate actors and individuals. It is difficult to find a Jean Monet or a Robert Schuman equivalent in contemporary East Asia. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Lee Kuan Yew, and Kim Dae-jung are the principal exponents of East Asian thinking, but unlike Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer, they do not lead major powers. Outside government, the intellectuals pushing the process are not single-minded in identifying East Asia as the unit of the future. Rather, their aim has been to advance East Asian regionalism by putting it in a larger context of multiple identities and a multilayered institutional architecture.

Nongovernmental processes are useful to state-led agendas and provide a wealth of technical expertise and contending points of view. They are the collective force for creating and shaping ideas and have the capacity to promote initiatives and establish a climate of opinion independent of any individual government. But they do not yet have the social foundation to create a transnational civil society that can drive regionalism separate from state elites willing to work with them.[13]

13. At least in Southeast Asia, some of the track II processes, especially the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies, have recognized the problem and tried to make connections to the "track III" world of NGOs through mechanisms including the newly formed ASEAN People's Assembly. There is not yet evidence of this kind of connection taking place on an East Asian basis.

East Asian Regionalism and the Pacific Regional Order: Complementary or Competitive?

The future of East Asian regionalism is difficult to predict. In part this is because its trajectory is nonteleological and can take several different paths. It is also because the project remains precarious. Even its strongest supporters are aware that East Asian regionalism is at a modest and early stage of development, faces formidable obstacles, and is unlikely to be a key factor in the balance of economic and political power in the region, at least in the immediate future. It has made substantial progress in a little over a decade but is not operating in a vacuum, even in its own backyard. The United States is not just the vital external actor; it is the major force in the economic and security relations of the region. In 1990, during the late days of the administration of the first George Bush, U.S. officials reacted strongly and negatively to the initial Mahathir ideas for an East Asian Economic Grouping. And in 1997 and 1998, U.S. officials were decidedly negative about the prospects of some kind of Asian Monetary Fund. But in the final years of the Clinton administration and the early years of the George W. Bush administration, officials have been generally supportive of the APT process and the East Asian dialogue channels accompanying it.

It is therefore not surprising that the Asian promoters of East Asian regionalism have usually gone to great pains to defuse anti-American rhetoric, to emphasize the value of the American presence in the region, and to underline the continued importance of trans-Pacific institutions, including APEC and the ARF, in which the United States plays a major role. The imagery and aim are not Fortress Asia. Indeed, it is this pro-American approach that has permitted countries such as Japan, Singapore, and South Korea to play major roles in East Asian regionalism at the same time that they have maintained close relationships with Washington.

Looking beyond national tactics to more fundamental ideas, a key issue is how a nascent East Asian regionalism will connect with the existing Pacific order underpinned by the presence and power of the United States. Some advocates of East Asian regionalism, among them Prime Minister Mahathir, see it explicitly as a way of building a regional formation that can diminish or counter American influence. This is not a rejection of globalization, nor is it anti-Americanism; rather it is the view that for reasons of function, identity, and interest, a more self-regarding East Asian arrangement is needed. Several academics have concluded that the economic crisis of 1997 solidified concerns about too much American influence and led to the current phase of APT-led regionalism. In the words of one: "The contours of post-financial crisis regionalism are, by state design, aimed at restoring to Asia a greater degree of political power and autonomy vis-à-vis the rest of the world, and the U.S. and the international financial institutions it controls, in particular" (Bowles 2002, 231).

A second point of view is that whatever the feelings of resentment in Asia directed at the United States in the wake of the economic crisis, there is actually little likelihood that East Asia will soon emerge as an effective regional entity and certainly not one that is fundamentally at odds with the United States or Asia Pacific arrangements. This view emphasizes that the shared sense of identity in East Asia is fragile and thin, that East Asia is no more able to solve either the institutionalization dilemma or domestic intransigence to freer trade (especially in agriculture, fisheries, and forests) than was APEC, and that there are severe constraints on how far monetary and trade cooperation can proceed. Concludes one observer: "If, then, there exists a greater sense of East Asian identity post-crisis, for many of the governments of the region such a development need not come at the expense of linkages with extra-regional partners. The potential for the development of a closed East Asian economic bloc is no greater five years after the crisis than it was before then" (Ravenhill 2002, 193).

This is certainly the view of many governmental officials in the region, especially those from Singapore, South Korea, and Japan. It also is the view of the large majority of participants in the various track II policy networks supporting East Asian regionalism. They recognize the value of East Asian cooperation as useful in managing regional issues born of increased economic interdependence and as a means of developing bargaining power with outside institutions and governments, especially the United States and the European Union. But they are generally committed to a form of open regionalism, resistant to the idea of any kind of economic bloc (much less security arrangement), skeptical about claims of unique and common Asian values that would underpin a regional institution, and loath to see American withdrawal or disengagement from East Asia. Although aware of the limitations of Asia Pacific processes, including APEC and the ARF, and frequently concerned about surges of American triumphalism and arrogance, their aim has been to find ways to harmonize East Asian stirrings with Asia Pacific institutions. Put in broad terms, Asia Pacific and East Asian regionalism are conceived to be not competitors but opposite sides of the same coin.

Operationally, the purveyors of East Asian regionalism face a double challenge. One part of it is identifying the areas in which cooperation is necessary and feasible, overcoming the ghosts of a troubled history, and generating an awareness of regional commonalities if not identity. The second part is implementing a form of multilateralism that fits with regional conditions but that also produces the norms, rules, and procedures for effective, not just symbolic, cooperation. It is possible to have regionalism without multilateralism. Indeed, this was the East Asian experience in the eras of Chinese and Japanese imperial domination. But at the current moment, virtually all of the enthusiasts see regionalism and multilateralism as integrally linked.

The structure, rules, and principles of multilateralism are under review. The choice to broaden the range of institutions in eastern Asia, including the

creation of the APT process, reflected economic realities and the desire to create something new. But broadening did not solve the problem of how to establish an *effective* regional institution, whatever the geographical boundaries of the organization. Rather than thinking that the solution to the institutionalization dilemma must come on an Asians-only basis, members of track II circles see the solution emerging in the overlap between Asia Pacific processes and East Asian ones. Advances in one presumably would spill over into the other. This is certainly the expectation of groups like the PECC Finance Forum, which has endorsed the Chiang Mai Initiative, and the Manila Framework Group; both groups organized on an East Asian basis as useful means for intensifying regional surveillance processes (PECC 2002).

China looms as an increasingly important power in East Asia. If there were to be a sustained challenge to American influence and the American order in the Pacific, it would come from China. China's embrace of multilateral institutions since 1996 has been substantial; indeed, it has moved in less than a decade from a defensive and wary neighbor to an engaged participant and now an active leader. The two principal reasons for this shift are that China is attempting to reassure anxious neighbors about its intentions and that it recognizes the value of multilateral cooperation in addressing a range of transnational issues. East Asia and the APT are just one of the geographical configurations for multilateral cooperation advanced by Chinese officials, with others operating on a trans-Pacific basis (e.g., China's involvement in APEC and the ARF), a pan-Asian basis (the Boao Forum), a central Asian basis (e.g., the Shanghai Cooperation Organization), or a "bilateral" basis (with individual countries and ASEAN as a collectivity).

The more subtle issue is whether Chinese officials and intellectuals are developing a distinctive approach to the form and rules of multilateral institutions in the region, something that might be called multilateralism with Chinese characteristics. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, based in China and created mainly at Beijing's behest, gives some clues in that it is decidedly state-centric, committed to conventional principles of sovereignty and noninterference, and dedicated to defending state interests against perceived challenges from nonstate actors. It operates on principles similar to those of ASEAN. This particular formulation is neither innovative nor likely to be seen as palatable or productive by most countries or publics in a broader Asian setting.

This leads to the conclusion that China has neither the capacity nor vision at this point to create an independent multilateral framework that operates against the interests of the United States, at least in the short term. Nor is there the constituency in other countries in the region to support such a venture, even if it were China's intention. Instead, like those in all of the other countries in the region, Chinese officials and academics have not presented the issue as a zero-sum competition with the United States. Chinese efforts inside the ARF in 1997 and 1998 to use it as a means to undermine the system

of America's bilateral alliances stopped fairly quickly. Those with their hands on the rudder of East Asian regionalism show few signs of traveling to an anti-American destination.

If there were to have been a strategic parallel to the economic anxieties about American power in the wake of the economic crisis, it is not visible even in the context of heavy American assertiveness, including the expanded presence of American forces in central and Southeast Asia after the events of September 11 and the invasion of Iraq. Although aspects of American policy have been criticized, almost all states support the efforts to suppress terrorism and accept a larger presence of American forces in the region. Indeed, the prospects for cooperation among the great powers are improving, albeit on a narrow basis of state-centered antiterrorism and antiseparatism. The rhetoric of regionalism is unchanged, but if there is counterbalancing, it is exquisitely subtle and well disguised.[14]

The American-led alliance system underpins the regional security order even as a more complex system is being constructed on the economic front. The compatibility of the two sets of arrangements has been an essential aspect of their success. All of the multiple forms of regionalism have germinated and developed in a post–Cold War setting involving unusually positive relations among the great powers. For the moment there is a virtuous cycle in which these positive relations encourage regional institutions and regional institutions provide a more positive foundation, albeit in limited ways, for cooperation among the great powers.

In the event of a major military conflict in the region, the viability of the regional institutions would be severely tested. If it involved a direct United States–China conflict or the creation of some kind of military alliance for the purpose of containing China, Asia Pacific and East Asian regionalism would shatter together. It is at least plausible that the geopolitical rationale for regional multilateralism is that it reduces the prospects of this kind of conflict or containment possibility.

Is there the prospect that the policy networks that interconnect East Asia and Asia Pacific will mature into policy communities that can promote a deeper regionalism and institutionalization? In part this depends on geopolitics and geo-economics. It will also depend on the imagination and capacity of the nongovernmental groups themselves. Calls for Community with a capital C and projects to create a vision, whether constructed on an East Asian or

14. The absence of counterbalancing is generating an interesting theoretical debate. David Kang argues that East Asians are more likely to join the bandwagon of a major power (China or the United States) than to counterbalance it because of a cultural and historical preference for hierarchy (Kang 2003a). Amitav Acharya argues that Asia's future will not include hierarchical arrangements, counterbalancing, or bandwagoning as key elements. Rather, he sees the development of regional interdependence, norms, and institutions within a neo-Westphalian framework as more likely and more durable sources of East Asian stability (Acharya 2003).

Asia Pacific basis, still tend to ring hollow. Nationalism remains much stronger than regionalism, and governments remain far more dominant than any constellation of transnational actors.

The regional institutional architecture can be expected to be complex and diverse in its next phase. It likely will be composed of multiple overlapping organizations at the governmental and nongovernmental levels. The slow march to building more effective institutions and identity is not proceeding on a single track. In the scribblings and imaginings of a handful of cosmopolitan Asian intellectuals and political leaders are the seeds of a deeper East Asian regionalism. The genius of the process is its pragmatism and realism. Its failing is that it has not yet captured the support of Asian publics or elites in looking beyond the differences of the past and toward a poststatist agenda that is at least a generation away.