



Do Institutions Matter?

Regional Institutions and
Regionalism in East Asia

RSIS Monograph No. 13

Edited by
See Seng Tan

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**DO INSTITUTIONS MATTER?
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REGIONALISM IN EAST ASIA**

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**REPORT OF THE STUDY GROUP FOR
THE SENTOSA ROUNDTABLE ON ASIAN SECURITY
2007–2008**

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Do Institutions Matter?

Regional Institutions and Regionalism in East Asia

On 1 January 2007, the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) was inaugurated at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. It was originally established as the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies (IDSS) on 30 July 1996. The IDSS remains as a key component within the RSIS, focusing on security research, while the School takes over its teaching functions. The RSIS will:

- a. Provide a rigorous professional graduate education with a strong practical emphasis,
- b. Conduct policy-relevant research in defence, national security, international relations, international political economy, strategic studies and diplomacy, and
- c. Build a global network of like-minded professional schools.

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PREFACE

Whether and how regional institutions and the ongoing process of institutionalization in East Asia contribute to the quest for the security, peace and stability of that region is the concern of interest to the Sentosa Roundtable on Asian Security 2007–2008, the second of three annual roundtables conducted between 2006 and 2009. Made possible by the generous support of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation of Japan, the Sentosa Roundtable, hosted by the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore, brings together leading analysts, scholars, practitioners and activists of Asian international affairs for two days of frank and constructive discussions on the current and future state of Asian security. In particular, the discussions focus on prospects for transforming the Asian region into a security community, where regional states commit to peaceful relations and the avoidance of war with one another.

To that end, the purpose of the Sentosa Roundtable Study Group (hereafter SRSG), comprising a small collective of subject specialists, is to produce assessments of the specific issues under consideration, so as to facilitate the subsequent roundtable discussions. The SRSG is usually held three or so months before the Roundtable. The first of these, SRSG 2006–2007, examined the links between economics and East Asian security. The second, SRSG 2007–2008, looks at the relationship between institutions and security. The third, SRSG 2008–2009, will explore the nexus between cultural factors and the security of East Asia. In particular, the second SRSG, whose report provided the contents of this monograph, assesses the relevance of regional inter-governmental institutions—the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Plus Three, the East Asia Summit and so forth—to regional security, stability and community building in East Asia. The deliberations of an

October 2007 meeting were further embellished by a series of independently commissioned papers (see the following chapters). A draft version of this monograph served as the basis for discussion at the second Sentosa Roundtable held in Sentosa, Singapore, in January 2008.

I wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following people, without whom this report would not have been possible: first, the six authors who contributed their respective reflections below; second, Ralf Emmers and Hiro Katsumata, who generously shared their expertise and time; third, colleagues at the S. Rajaratnam School who provided administrative assistance; and, finally, Masato Seko and Eriko Tada of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (Eriko has since left the foundation), who offered invaluable counsel and support.

See Seng Tan

GLOSSARY

AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Area
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APT	ASEAN Plus Three (or ASEAN+3)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBM	Confidence building measure
EAC	East Asian Community
EAEC	East Asia Economic Caucus
EAEG	East Asia Economic Grouping
EAS	East Asia Summit
EAVG	East Asia Vision Group
FTA	Free trade agreement
KEDO	Korean Energy Development Organization
MRM	Mutual reassurance measures
OSCE	Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAPTA	South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SOM	Senior Officials' Meeting
SPT	Six Party Talks
TAC	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation
ZOPFAN	Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality

INTRODUCTION

See Seng Tan

Do institutions matter to regional security and regional community building in East Asia? The diplomatic landscape of post-Cold War Asia boasts a plethora of regional institutions, such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) and the East Asia Summit (EAS). Other than APEC, the rest of these institutions (ARF, APT and EAS) all share a common hub in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This latter group of ASEAN-based institutions has long been known for its collective emphasis on open regionalism, soft institutionalism, flexible consensus, and comprehensive and cooperative security. However, ASEAN's attempt to move to a more rules-based regionalism implies the possibility of institutional creep in Asia. For the foreseeable future, the emergence of such institutionalized regionalism is likely restricted to Southeast Asia, although the Six Party Talks (SPT) are increasingly seen by some as a building block for a new security architecture for Northeast Asia, whether in combination with or as an alternative to the extant Cold War-era system of U.S.-led alliances.

Arguably, the emerging institutionalization of East Asia puts the region's evolving security order somewhere between a balance of power, on one hand, and a regional community with the relevant institutional and normative attributes, on the other.¹ That said, while most analysts of Asian security do not dispute this argument, they nonetheless disagree on whether the character of extant East Asian regionalism actually

facilitates the formation of East Asia into a fully-fledged community. Some of these differences are evident in the following contributions to this study. Comprising deliberations from a workshop conducted at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore and a series of commissioned chapters by leading and upcoming analysts of Asian international relations, the study addresses conceptual and empirical concerns regarding regionalism, regional order and regional community in East Asia.

AIMS OF THIS STUDY

Whether and how regional institutions shape the security of the East Asian region and facilitate the building of regional community therein are concerns crucial to the Sentosa Roundtable,² a three-year project sponsored by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation of Japan. In Sanskrit, the term *sentosa* means “contentment” or “satisfaction”. The Roundtable explores the simultaneous existence and emergence of great powers in the region—including China, India, Japan, the United States and aspirants such as North Korea—and, together with member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ramifications of their interactions for Asian security order and community. The project aims to find pathways to peace and security—contentment and satisfaction, in short—among these countries as they relate to one another amid contemporary regional conditions of growing interdependence and institutionalization.

Against that backdrop, this monograph has four aims. First, it assesses whether the region’s institutions—such as the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Plus Three, the East Asia Summit and so forth—and, crucially, the way they relate to one another, matter in the establishment of East Asia’s regional security order and in the formation of the regional community. In short, whether institutions are central or adjunct to regional order and regional community building is a key concern of this monograph.

Second, the monograph explores whether the so-called “noodle bowl” of regional institutions in East Asia resembles a strategically coherent

regional architecture and foundation for an East Asian Community, or complicates the community-building process as a result of competing mandates, agendas and conflicting memberships and definitions of “region-ness”. This question is of fundamental concern, given the divergence in views among Asian countries regarding which regional institution constitutes the most appropriate foundation upon which the East Asia region should build the East Asian Community. This difference is most evident in the debate over the ostensible role and membership of the East Asia Summit.

Third, whether the utility of East Asian regional institutions is best defined in geographical or in functional (i.e. issue-specific) terms is another question of interest to this study. The general aim of issue-based institutions is to solve common problems caused by interdependence. There is therefore the possibility that functionally oriented institutions can impede regionalism and hence community formation, because they do not hold strictly to a geographically bounded conception of region and specifications.³

Finally, the monograph assesses whether the region’s institutions, in terms of their extant institutional design, process and practice, are predominantly sociological, contractual or *realpolitik* (or a combination of these) in orientation.⁴ Given the pervasive adherence by East Asian countries to principles like state sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference—norms enshrined within the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), of which all EAS members are signatories—and the continued existence in the region of Cold War-era bilateral security alliances, it was clear that *realpolitik* considerations still predominate in many facets of East Asian regionalism.

ARCHITECTURE OF THIS STUDY

There are six chapters in this monograph.

In Chapter 1, Christopher Roberts assesses the explanatory power of the realist (*realpolitik*), neo-liberal (contractual) and constructivist (sociological) perspectives in the study of East Asian regional institutions, and argues in favour of an analytically eclectic approach that, in his view,

apprehends better the complexity of East Asian regional integration. For Roberts, the “reality” is that “all the major paradigms add to the conceptual toolkit and provide valuable insight”. He understands integration as a process that reflects a “spectrum” of behaviours. Accordingly, members of regional institutions behave differently at different stages of “comprehensive integration”. At a low level of integration, realpolitik-type behaviours would likely predominate. At a high level of integration, contractual-type behaviours emerge as the security dilemma is diminished through economic interdependence and cooperative security arrangements. As interdependence and cooperation increase, states become socialized and assume a shared collective identity. And with the security “all but mitigated”, a security community emerges with the concomitant emergence of a stable peace among regional states. While Roberts rejects the notion that international identities and practices cannot be changed, he nonetheless believes that processes of integration and institutionalism in Asia “will likely take several decades” before they take root.

In the second chapter, Yongwook Ryu argues the continued primacy of the state sovereignty and non-interference norms in East Asia, as evidenced by the practices and achievements of the region’s institutions. ASEAN’s success has been in deepening economic integration among its members, and in creating a diplomatic community among its elites. The ARF progresses slowly in security cooperation as a result of its reliance on the ASEAN Way of consultation and consensus. Ryu sees the forum moving towards “a weak form of preventive diplomacy” as member states participate in maritime security and disaster relief exercises. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) facilitates energy and economic cooperation among its members, while prospects that the SPT may eventually become a multilateral security regime for Northeast Asia cannot be ruled out. Although all these institutions remain committed to the norms of state sovereignty and non-interference, the most obdurate of the lot in this regard remain the SCO and the SPT. Ryu sees the SCO and SPT as potential competitors of the ARF in that all three institutions are involved in security issues, and calls for a division of labour among them. Ryu argues that East Asian institutions are “communicative arenas in which participants exchange their different views on security issues,

learn to understand the dominant international norms, attempt to persuade one another through principled argumentation, and alter each other's behaviour". In short, they have succeeded in "norm building" in support of the Westphalian order.

In Chapter 3, Shin-wha Lee calls for a problem-driven and issue-specific approach to East Asian regionalism. Like her fellow contributors in this volume, Lee does not think that the complexity of East Asia can or should be reduced to a particular variant of institutionalism, whether contractual, sociological or *realpolitik*. Like them, she argues that East Asian countries remain fixated to "individual state-centric" thinking where their security is concerned. In light of divergent strategic perceptions, competing national interests and different policy directions, the task of establishing a regional security cooperation regime, she argues, "that would satisfy all countries involved will be a tall order". That said, the establishment of such a regime can regularize dialogue and foster understanding among Asian states, enhance confidence building and mutual interest, build a "trade friendly and economically sound" region, and promote regional peace and stability by establishing codes of conduct. However, none of the existing cooperative mechanisms, whether ASEAN, the APT, the ARF or the EAS, as she notes, has "taken on a central coordinating responsibility" for the East Asian region. Because of the elemental role played by the United States in the region's security matters, Lee argues that regional institutionalism in East Asia can neither be geographically-based nor exclusive. As such, issue-specificity is by default the more probable basis for a viable East Asian regionalism.

The fourth chapter, by Shiping Tang, also argues for an issue-based institutionalism so far as East Asian regionalism is concerned. He takes umbrage with what he sees as the excessive reliance on theoretical functionalism in institutional scholarship, which does not explain why and how institutions change. Tang calls attention to Douglass North's distinction between organizations, which are collectives of actors in social life, and institutions, which refer to the rules of social life. Like his fellow contributors, Tang sees East Asian institutional progress as essentially delimited by the shared commitment to sovereignty norms, as evidenced by the ASEAN Way. The inability of East Asian groups to

develop more elaborate and enforceable rules is the reason why they are properly considered “organizations” rather than “institutions”. For Tang, the way forward to a rules-based regionalism—evolving from organization to institution, in short—in East Asia is for regional groups to build cooperation around specific issues and problems. In his view, this would lead to the formulation of rules that underpin functional cooperation—rules that provide the building blocks to a comprehensive rule-oriented system. When that happens, the region’s groups can then be truly considered institutions and not just organizations.

In Chapter 5, Ron Huisken evaluates ASEAN’s default monopoly of East Asian regionalism, and finds the ability of the Association as regional leader circumscribed by major power influence. According to Huisken, ASEAN’s broad objective has been “to aspire to an hierarchical regional order that retains America’s dominant superpower position while incorporating China in a regional great power position just below it”. While ASEAN has succeeded at building regional order—and even security community, the author contends—in Southeast Asia, he does not think that ASEAN can accomplish the same where the wider East Asian region is concerned, not especially if the Association is working alone. ASEAN’s “game plan”, as Huisken puts it, “is to engineer deeper engagement between and the development of collegiate instincts amongst the major powers beyond the arena of Southeast Asia”—an aim that does not comport with extant empirical realities. In this respect, despite encouraging developments in East Asia, Huisken is concerned about the evident shared reluctance in the two relationships of “irreducible importance” within the region, namely, Sino-Japanese ties on one hand and Sino-U.S. ties on the other, to move beyond longstanding caution and suspicion. Instead, he argues that “all three powers [China, Japan and the United States] are not yet prepared to subject their wider bilateral relationship to the discipline and constraints of an institutionalized process”—a resistance that does not bode well for the future of East Asia’s security. In this regard, Huisken sees the crucial challenge for ASEAN arising from Chinese engagement, and the uneven effects that can have on ASEAN states and the sorts of countervailing moves by the Americans and the Japanese that can elicit.

The final chapter is by Tang Siew Mun. Mindful of the importance of the great powers to East Asian security, Tang believes that no Asian security community can ever be possible without the prior formation of a concert among the major powers. This is exemplified by the reliance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) on the commitment of non-ASEAN signatories to the peaceful settlement of disputes for its success. A concert of powers would dampen great-power rivalry and diminish the prospect for great-power conflict in East Asia. While Tang concedes that forming a concert among China, Japan and the United States would not be easy, he nonetheless sees plausible cooperation among them on a shared concern: the maintenance and enhancement of regional peace and stability. Moreover, a viable concert would contribute to the rise of an inclusive, cooperation-based regional security—as Tang puts it, “security *against* to security *with*”—necessary to the formation of an Asian security community. Such a community, he argues, can no longer rely on the ASEAN Way, but “should be rule-based and with built-in safeguards to assure weaker states that they would not be strong-armed by strong parties”.

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND REGIONALISM IN EAST ASIA

As noted earlier, the aims of this study are fourfold. First, it addresses the question of whether East Asia’s institutions are adjunct or central to the region’s security and community-building process. Second, it addresses the issue of strategic or architectural coherence of East Asian institutionalism, and assesses whether regional institutions complement or compete against one another. Third, it addresses the concern of “issue-specificity”, which several contributors see as the apposite basis of East Asian institutionalism and regionalism. Finally, it addresses the theoretical question of analytical and/or conceptual perspectives to the study of institutions and regional order and community in East Asia.

How do the authors of this monograph respond to these aims?

Institutional Relevance

First, there is a general agreement among the chapters that regional institutions contribute to the peace, security and stability of East Asia.

In one participant's words, those institutions "function not only as the arena for discussion, but also as a means to construct stable, elastic, and adaptive regional community structure".

At the same time, the contributors also agree that East Asia's institutions are clearly limited—deliberately so—in terms of what they can accomplish. At present, they are arguably more than mere adjuncts, though far from being central elements, of regional order and community. Yongwook Ryu argues that although Westphalian principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other states continue to serve as the diplomatic foundation for the region's institutions, it nonetheless provides the social-cum-historical basis upon which regional cooperation has developed and evolved. As Ryu has noted:

Regardless of their effectiveness, at the bare minimum, these organizations are communicative arenas in which participants exchange their different views on security issues, learn to understand the dominant international norms, attempt to persuade one another through principled argumentation, and alter each other's behaviour.

Third, the effectiveness of East Asia's institutions is inextricably linked to the role and influence of the great powers. A common theme in all of the following chapters is that no amount of institutional efficacy would have been possible without the endorsement of and contributions by the great powers—namely, China, Japan and the United States—to regional security. In this regard, Tang Siew Mun argues that there can be no East Asian community without a concert of great powers as its foundation. On the other hand, Ron Huisken believes that all three powers identified above "are not yet prepared to subject their wider bilateral relationship[s] to the discipline and constraints of an institutionalized process".

Fourth, in view of the salience of great powers to East Asian regionalism and regional security, Shiping Tang suggests that the (future) order and community of East Asia may be hegemonic rather than cooperation-based. He observes, for instance, that no institutional system—understood in this context as a set of rules and principles—can emerge without the imposition of order by a preponderant power, such as the United States had done in post-war Western Europe and Japan, and the Soviet Union had done in Eastern Europe. If so, it remains unclear in the East

Asian context whether the United States, China or Japan (or a combination of these powers), or less likely, ASEAN, can conceivably play the role of the hegemonic rule-maker.

Fifth, several contributors share the view that the key challenge for East Asian security would be China and the ability of ASEAN and the others to keep the Chinese committed to developing as a responsible power.

Finally, it is interesting to note that none of the chapters, including the realist-oriented ones, dismiss the possibility for institutional change and community formation in East Asia. If anything, they allow that these developments can occur in an evolutionary fashion, particularly with the right conditions in place. Nonetheless, they insist that institutional change in East Asia is unlikely without the commitment and participation of the great powers.

Institutional Congruence or Competition

There is agreement that no overarching structure or vision exists to guide the regional enterprise in East Asia. Although some analysts see the semblance of a functional differentiation of labour and purpose among the institutions, no formal division exists. Rather, the noodle-bowl quality of East Asian regionalism is seemingly driven by a penchant to create new organizations with little thought for what they are for and how they relate to one another. The creation of the East Asia Summit in December 2005, for example, prompted bafflement even among some proponents of East Asian institutionalism regarding the summit's *raison d'être*. As such, how best to move the region beyond the mere proliferation of institutional forms to substantive and meaningful cooperation and community building would be the principal challenge for East Asian states. As former ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong once put it, the region has sufficient "talk shops"; the key, however, is to deepen regional cooperation.

On the other hand, the chapters by Ryu and Lee argue that despite the evident lack of strategic coherence in the regional architecture, some institutions, such as the ARF and APEC, "complement each other nicely", given their near-identical memberships and the corresponding

focus of the ARF on security and that of APEC on economics. Furthermore, encouraging greater congruence and synergy between institutions through linking them in some way—scheduling them back-to-back in the same venue, for example—is an idea many observers increasingly support. In the same vein, Ryu even proposes the creation of a common secretariat for both organizations.

Third, the issue of leadership in East Asia and its contribution to inter-institution congruence or rivalry is a key concern common to all the chapters. Several authors acknowledge that ASEAN, by default, remains the politically safest option to occupy the “driver’s seat” vis-à-vis the region, even though the Association’s contribution has essentially been to preserve the regional status quo and its hold over the regional institutions that it helped establish. That said, the importance of great-power cooperation (or, more accurately, its lack) to East Asia’s security is glaringly obvious, most recently in the debate over the East Asia Summit (EAS) and its relationship to the ASEAN Plus Three (APT). The key points of that debate are worth rehearsing here.

China had initially assumed that the EAS would adopt contours and composition commensurate with those of the APT. However, when it became clear by the commencement of the inaugural EAS that Australia, India and New Zealand would be included as members—presumably as countervailing forces against perceived Chinese predominance—China proposed a two-tiered summit: a core tier comprising the APT and entrusted with the responsibility of building the East Asian Community and an outer tier made up of the three “outsiders” and presumably non-participants in regional community formation. In an official commentary released in July 2006, Beijing affirmed its support for the APT as “the main channel for building the East Asia Community, to be completed by the East Asia Summit and other mechanisms”⁵ China’s concern stemmed from its belief that the APT is the right vehicle for realizing the collective aspiration towards the East Asian Community, although of late the Chinese have shown willingness to reconsider the EAS as an alternative.

South Korea, Myanmar, Malaysia and Thailand see the APT as the appropriate vehicle for building the East Asian Community. At the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Hanoi in November 2006,

Malaysia's Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi insisted that the APT constitutes the "primary vehicle" for community building in the region, while the EAS could complement it as a useful forum for dialogue on strategic issues involving additional participants in support of community building in the region. He further urged that the integrity and distinctiveness of the two respective processes be preserved.

On the other hand, Japan's preference is that newcomers India, Australia and New Zealand be more than mere passengers on the road to the East Asian Community. Indonesia, Singapore and others share Tokyo's view of the EAS as a regional platform conducive for facilitating the formation of regional community. The choice to provide an economic rationale for the EAS—a proposal that, while not necessarily in competition with the idea of the APT as the appropriate vehicle for regional economic integration, would likely have irritated the Chinese makes good sense, given India's rise as an economic player. At the same time, the emergence of a new quadripartite strategic partnership between Australia, India, Japan and the United States—of whom the first three countries are EAS members—might have fuelled Chinese suspicions regarding Japanese intentions behind their strong support for the EAS.

As such, it is likely that no substantial progress by the EAS is possible unless and until the leadership issue is resolved. As Shin-wah Lee notes in her essay, "the settlement of this dispute over the summit's leadership will be a vital issue in the new balancing game within the East Asian region building process".

Fourth, the divergence in economic visions of China and Japan hint at the predominance of geopolitical considerations. Not all the contributors see this as a necessarily bad thing, in view of China's status as a "late, late developer" in the process of becoming a "normal" power, which involves learning and respecting sovereignty norms and other diplomatic principles of the modern state system. In this regard, East Asia's regional institutions play a key role as arenas facilitating the so-called "normalization" of its members as sovereign states—much as ASEAN played a similar role for post-colonial Southeast Asian countries. Confidence building in Europe first started with the adoption of fundamental principles. As

such, Ryu and Tang Siew Mun both note that the construction of a stable regional order in East Asia can begin “by establishing a code of conduct” to guide regional multilateral security dialogue and cooperation efforts, not least where Sino-Japanese ties are concerned.

A fifth point has to do with the current rapprochement effort between Beijing and Tokyo, which several contributors see as crucial, without which East Asian regionalism, in their opinion, would in all likelihood fail. According to a recent commentary by Shiping Tang and Haruko Satoh: “The future of the region depends on the rise of China and the revitalization of Japan; one cannot happen without the other. In other words, the future now depends on China and Japan thinking together.”⁶ For instance, Franco-German post-war rapprochement had been integral to the success of the European Community (now Union), as had Argentine-Brazilian reconciliation been vital to the success of the Common Market of the South (better known as MERCOSUR). As several contributors in this study point out, a key prerequisite of East Asian order and community is the need for great powers to establish and maintain cooperative ties with one another. For Ron Huisken, the well being of both the Sino-U.S. and Sino-Japanese bilateral relationships is fundamental in this regard. On his part, Tang Siew Mun argues for a concert of great powers—China, Japan and the United States, certainly, and possibly including India—as the basis on which the East Asian Community can be built.

Finally, the question of U.S. participation in East Asia’s regional institutions is also of concern. America’s absence in the EAS became an issue with the inclusion of Australia, New Zealand and India—all of whom were seen by China and others as U.S. proxies, unofficial or otherwise—in the summit. Despite Washington’s politic endorsement of Beijing’s proactive efforts in regionalism and multilateral diplomacy, some contributors do not discount the fact that the United States is clearly concerned over whatever gains China may have made at its expense. Moreover, given America’s membership in the ARF and its leadership of APEC, it is inconceivable that any attempt to make these two institutions—or, arguably, the other East Asian institutions—more complementary must necessarily involve U.S. input.

Issue-Specificity

The contributors are agreed that for East Asia's regional institutions to be effective, they need to address specific issues and problems. Shiping Tang and Shin-wha Lee, for example, argue that East Asian institutions ought to adopt problem-oriented and problem-solving approaches to regional cooperation. While Yongwook Ryu readily concedes that regional "talk shops" have served and would continue to serve a useful purpose, he, much like his fellow contributors, share the view that East Asian institutions need to balance talk with substantive cooperation. For example, although the ASEAN Way of consensus and consultation has been useful to the region, the contributors nonetheless assent that movement towards a rules-based regionalism—as exemplified by the ASEAN Charter—is a welcome development, despite reservations regarding the watered-down quality of the charter when it was officially unveiled in November 2007.

In a sense, there is inter-governmental support for the view that East Asian regionalism should be problem oriented. For some ASEAN leaders, the experience of early post-war European integration offers useful lessons for ASEAN's efforts to establish the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA)—and, by extension, the ASEAN Economic Community—by 2015. While the European experience may have involved myriad aspects of functional or technical cooperation among Western European economies in niche areas, it is precisely these prosaic yet necessary collaborations that have provided Europe a basis for further cooperation in non-economic areas.

Another utility of functional cooperation has to do with the establishment and enforcement of rules. For Shiping Tang, the pursuit of issue-specific cooperation can conceivably lead to another promising development: the creation of issue-driven rules that are binding. He notes that despite criticism against ASEAN for its longstanding reluctance to arm its provisions with enforceable rules, the Chiang Mai Initiative, established in response to the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, is an early indication that East Asian states are not opposed to moving in a rules-based direction so long as regional conditions merit it.

Clearly, the task of developing East Asian regionalism along issue-specific lines is not without challenges. At present, no formal division of labour exists among East Asian institutions. To be sure, the ARF has long been seen as the appropriate forum for regional security, whereas the APEC and the APT are seen as fora for regional economic affairs. However, as the Sino-Japanese debate over the rationale for the EAS has shown, concurrence over the need for issue-specific institutions does not mean that East Asian countries necessarily agree over which particular institution should handle which particular issue. Nonetheless, the inclusion of countries like Australia and India in the EAS membership for economic, political and strategic reasons suggests that East Asian regionalism, despite the heated debate over membership and geography, has not restricted itself to a geographical definition.

Theoretical and Analytical Considerations

The academic literature on international institutions comprises contractual, sociological and realpolitik perspectives.

- Contractual (or neo-liberal) institutionalism emphasizes responses by the institution's members to incentives and disincentives provided externally by the institution (e.g. rules, membership requirements) or by certain principal actors within the institution. Contractually-based institutions arguably contribute to international security and stability through: (i) facilitating reciprocity among their member countries; (ii) providing them information to facilitate their decision making; (iii) reducing transaction costs that would have otherwise blighted those not institutionally linked; (iv) making their commitments more credible; and (v) establishing policy coordination among member states.⁷
- Sociological (or constructivist) institutionalism emphasizes socialization processes and the formation of habits of cooperation. By ostensibly embodying a non-realpolitik ideology, it is argued that institutions relatively low in level of institutionalization may nonetheless do reasonably well in cooperation despite

being mere “talk shops”. Such socially-based institutions conceivably contribute to security through an institutional structure conducive to persuasion that facilitates the development of habits of cooperation among members in the absence of external motivations. Regional-security dialogue processes hence take on significance as platforms through which cooperation enhancing—or, at the very least, status-quo promoting—norms and conventions can be generated and diffused. Its features likely include: (i) a relatively small membership with some consistency over time in the participants to the institution; (ii) a decision-making process that is consensus-based; and (iii) an institutional mandate that emphasizes information-sharing, consultation and deliberation rather than negotiation and legislation.⁸

- Against the above perspectives stands the reapolitik (or realist) view on international institutions. Expressly less optimistic than the foregoing, reapolitik readings of institutions make the following points: (i) states do cooperate in an anarchic world, but cooperation is more often than not inhibited by considerations of relative gains and concerns over free-riding and cheating; (ii) the influence of institutions on state behaviour is minimal as institutions are created and shaped by the most powerful states for maintaining or increasing their power; (iii) contractual institutionalism has limited explanatory utility vis-à-vis the security realm since it ignores relative gains; and (iv) the empirical record of international institutions argues against the claims of contractual and sociological institutionalisms.⁹

Against the aforementioned perspectives, the following observations can be drawn from this study.

First, the consensus among the contributors is that no single analytical perspective adequately explains the complex character of the contemporary East Asian region.¹⁰ In view of the ongoing institutional creep in East Asia and the rise of a loosely defined normative framework, the contributors see East Asia as a region in transition towards a more complex architecture that, in the foreseeable future, would likely include

more contractually and sociologically oriented features. As the chapter by Christopher Roberts notes, it is unfair to force an either/or option on whether this or that analytical perspective best explains East Asian regionalism because each theoretical variant of institutionalism, whether contractual, sociological or *realpolitik*, highlights particular features of regionalism at particular phases of the region's institutional development. On the other hand, it is also fair to say, as others have done, that features particular to all three analytical perspectives are discernable in the complex milieu of East Asian regionalism today.¹¹ It is in this vein that Roberts advocates the use of analytical eclectic approaches to the study of East Asian institutionalism. Nonetheless, the predominance of sovereignty norms in East Asia today should not preclude the appreciation that their emergence was a development of recent vintage (i.e. post-war and post-colonial).

Second, it is noteworthy that not all the contributors are entirely comfortable with terms like “East Asia” and “regionalism”, since these are in themselves contested. No regional institution has the same membership as another, which complicates any attempt at a geographical reference, not least that of East Asia. Moreover, if the concept of regionalism refers to a pan-regional enmeshment, if not integration, then insofar as the extant institutionalism of East Asia—with its proliferation of institutional forms without a commensurate strategic coherence and substantive cooperation—is concerned, then it might make sense to avoid treating “regionalism” and “institutionalism” as interchangeable concepts when defining and describing East Asia.

Third, the challenges and prospects for institutional change is a concern alluded to in most if not all the chapters, but especially in Shiping Tang's, who raises the need for analysis to be guided by a viable theory of institutional change. In this respect, Tang suggests that a conceptual distinction needs to be made between institution and organization, where “institution” refers to rules and principles, and “organization” refers to the collection of actors or members that constitute the organization. To be sure, all organizations require a modicum of rules and conventions in order to exist and function. Thus understood, East Asian institutions are therefore regional organiza-

tions presently engaged in the process of institutionalization, i.e. becoming institutions.

Finally, the argument that East Asian institutions should pursue a problem-oriented agenda and focus on functional cooperation raises the question of whether past theories of regional integration, such as neo-functionalism, popularized by Ernst B. Haas, are of use in analysing East Asian institutionalism. This has also been prompted by recent comments by regional leaders regarding the importance of learning from Europe's integration experience. It bears reminding that Haas himself rejected the utility of his own theoretical model for the study of European integration on the basis that the rise of the European Union had as much to do with external causes—notably, concern in the 1990s over the apparent regionalization of world trade—as internal.¹² That East Asia's institutions also arose partially, if not largely, due to external considerations—the formation of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the rise of China and India, among others—therefore suggests that discrepancies between East Asia and Europe could be less than previously assumed.

CONCLUSION

That East Asia today is not quite the “cockpit of great power rivalry”, as some had predicted, can be attributed in part to the regional institutions that dot its diplomatic landscape. These institutions are not only mechanisms of confidence building and reassurance for established powers, emerging powers as well as aspiring powers within East Asia or who have significant interests in the region. They also provide the region's smaller and weaker residents with a substantial say in the affairs and direction of the region, chiefly through ASEAN. While they can undoubtedly contribute to the realization of regional aspirations for an East Asia Community, innumerable challenges and problems still stand in the way towards such a goal, as highlighted in this study. But as this volume's contributors have shown, there is no shortage of possibilities by which the East Asian region, with the appropriate vision and requisite capacity and will, can build a community from its disparate parts.

NOTES

1. See, G. John Ikenberry and J. Tsuchiyama, "Between Balance of Power and Community: The Future of Multilateral Security Co-operation in the Asia-Pacific," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* Vol. 2 No. 1 (2002), pp. 69–94; Muthiah Alagappa (Ed.), *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).
2. The idea behind the Sentosa Roundtable on Asian Security was originally conceived by Professor Amitav Acharya, Director of the Centre for Governance and International Affairs at the University of Bristol, during his stint at RSIS.
3. This argument is made by Andrew Hurrell, "Regionalism in Theoretical Perspective", in Louise Fawcett and Andrew Hurrell (Eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organisation and Regional Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 37–73.
4. These three orientations correspond respectively with the constructivist, neo-liberal and realist perspectives in international relations theory.
5. Cited in Frank Frost and Ann Rann, "The East Asia Summit, Cebu, 2007: Issues and Prospects", E-Brief, 1 December 2006 (updated 20 December 2006). Canberra: Parliamentary Library, Parliament of Australia. Available at www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/FAD/eastasia_summit2007.htm.
6. Shiping Tang and Haruko Satoh, "Can China and Japan Think Together?" *PACNET* 52, 29 December 2007.
7. From Robert Keohane and Lisa Martin, "The Promise of Institutional Theory", *International Security* Vol. 20 No. 1 (Summer 1995), pp. 39–51.
8. From Alastair Iain Johnston, "Socialisation in International Institutions: The ASEAN Way and International Relations Theory", in G. John Ikenberry and Michael Mastanduno (Eds.), *International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 107–162.
9. From John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions", *International Security* Vol. 19 No. 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 5–49.
10. This is the conclusion of the sweeping anthology authored by leading scholars in Muthiah Alagappa (Ed.), *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).
11. See, Alagappa, *Asian Security Order*, and See Seng Tan and Amitav Acharya (Eds.), *Asia-Pacific Security Cooperation: National Interests and Regional Order* (Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 2004).
12. Haas' neo-functional theory of regional integration relies principally on internal or "endogenous" factors.

EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM

A BACKGROUNDER ON AN ECLECTIC ALTERNATIVE FOR ANALYSIS

Christopher B. Roberts

In analysing the importance of the various regional institutions in East Asia, the usual approach is to view the empirical evidence through the lens of one of the major schools of thought in International Relations (IR) theory. While each of these approaches have delivered many valuable insights about the nature of Asia's security architecture, the continuation of a paradigmatic divide has also diverted important intellectual effort away from the many comprehensive security challenges confronting Asia. In response, this chapter argues that such a divide is unnecessary (even counter-productive) as the reality is that all the major paradigms add to the conceptual toolkit and provide valuable insight. Consequently, this study suggests a spectrum of integration that provides a possible role for much of the behaviour predicted by all three of the major IR paradigms—realism, liberalism and constructivism. The chapter also seeks to provide a fresh interpretation of both the actual and potential role of Asia's institutions. In considering the geographic areas of South Asia, Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, it is suggested that the collection of states in Southeast Asia (with a few exceptions) represents the most stable and cooperative set of inter-state relations. While the dynamics of the region do not yet come close to satisfying IR concepts such that of a "security community", several of the Southeast Asian states do appear to have at least benefited through 40 years of dialogue and limited cooperation under the multilateral institution of ASEAN. Finally, while the balance of inter-state behaviour in Greater

Asia continues to fit within realist predictions, the history of Southeast Asia suggests that regional institutions can eventually reduce tensions and mistrust, thereby facilitating a limited shift from competitive to cooperative security and relations.

ECLECTICISM AND THE CONCEPT OF COMPREHENSIVE INTEGRATION

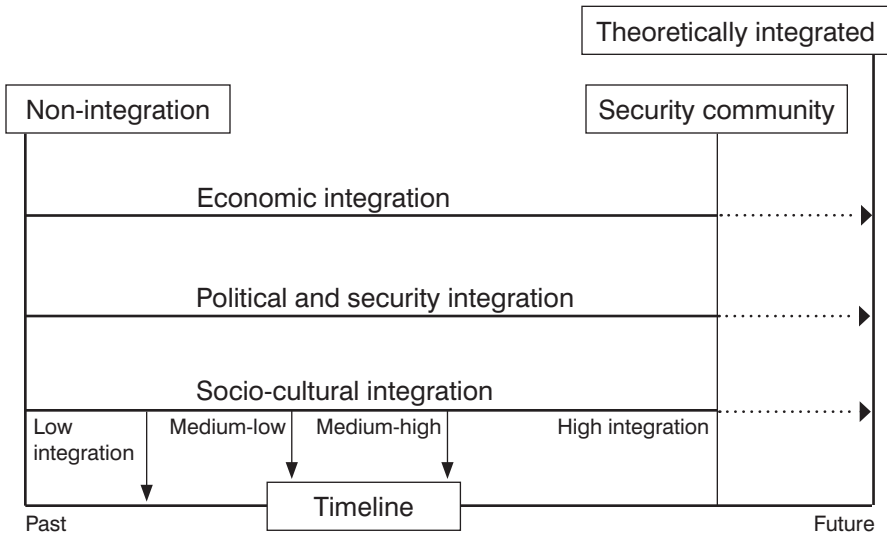
For nearly a decade, scholars such as Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett have been calling for a pragmatic middle ground between the viewpoints of the various schools of thought in international relations theory.¹ Increasingly, a combination of empirical evidence and considerations of practicality have compelled other scholars to join this call. In so doing, some scholars, such as Richard Lebow, have attempted to look beyond the illusion of incompatibility that lurks at the surface of major IR paradigms and have contended that all three paradigms are relevant because no single paradigm is able to fully capture the international system.² Such a contention may seem logical enough but in reflecting on the methodological dilemmas raised by this approach, an eminent professor once suggested that “eclecticism is a bit like a surgeon starting an operation without knowing which organ he is going to remove”. While this observation maintains a degree of validity, the problem is an underlying assumption against the potential for an alternative framework that might provide a basic order of procedure with different sets of insights and conclusions arising from different sets of empirical circumstances. In other words, if it were possible to connect general exposés of international behaviour with some kind of situational pattern, then it may also become possible to hypothesize when an international actor may exhibit the attributes of one school of thought as opposed to another.

For the purpose of understanding why different sets of states may exhibit different sets of behaviour, Muthiah Alagappa has already made a considerable contribution by suggesting a concept of order that, “spanning a spectrum, ... ranges from total disorder that is associated with the law of the jungle to the rule of law associated with a cohesive political community in which most people obey the law”³ However, and in the

context of attempting to understand the importance of Asia's institutions, the problem with Alagappa's concept of order is that it is more descriptive than predictive and/or prescriptive in nature. In order to overcome this dilemma, this chapter argues that the concept of integration—or, more accurately, the processes of integration—may provide a viable alternative to explain the types of behaviour international actors are likely to exhibit at a given point in time. For the purpose of this explanation, a previous publication by the author introduced the notion of comprehensive integration to not only draw out the structure and form of integration but also to hypothesize the order by which the processes of integration are likely to take place.

In line with the philosophical basis for the ASEAN security community proposal, Figure 1.1 illustrates the concept of comprehensive integration comprising three major foundations: economic, political and socio-cultural integration. One consequence of sufficiently high integration between the international actors (e.g. the Asian states) would be the emergence of relations and circumstances akin to those predicted by the notion of a security community. The dotted portions of the timelines

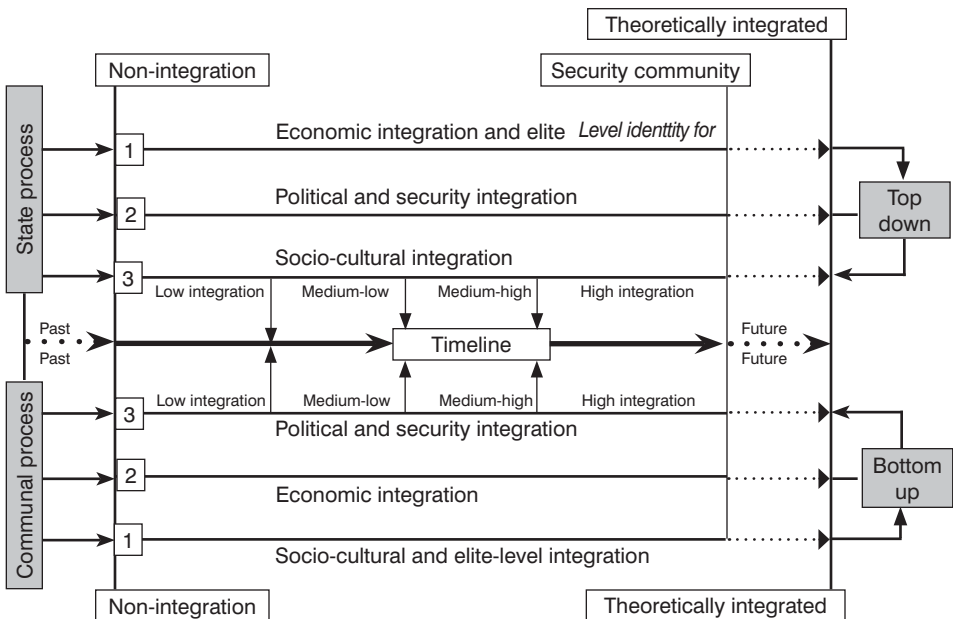
FIGURE 1.1
The pillars underlying comprehensive integration



that lie beyond the “security community” indicator are not linked to any particular timescale and represent the grey area that exists between the level of integration necessary to constitute a security community (assuming that would be a desirable end goal) and the theoretical abstraction of being integrated. The notion that Asian states can be “integrated” is considered a theoretical abstraction because, in reality, there can be no end to how much individuals, communities and states can be integrated into some kind of supranational entity. Further, it is not possible to become fully integrated where there is no discernable distinction between both the institutions and identities of the individual units of analysis or the identity and institutions of the security community itself. In other words, the processes of comprehensive integration are considered continuous and never entirely complete.

In building on insights from other theories and frameworks (such as nation-building), Figure 1.2 develops an integrated sketch of the likely

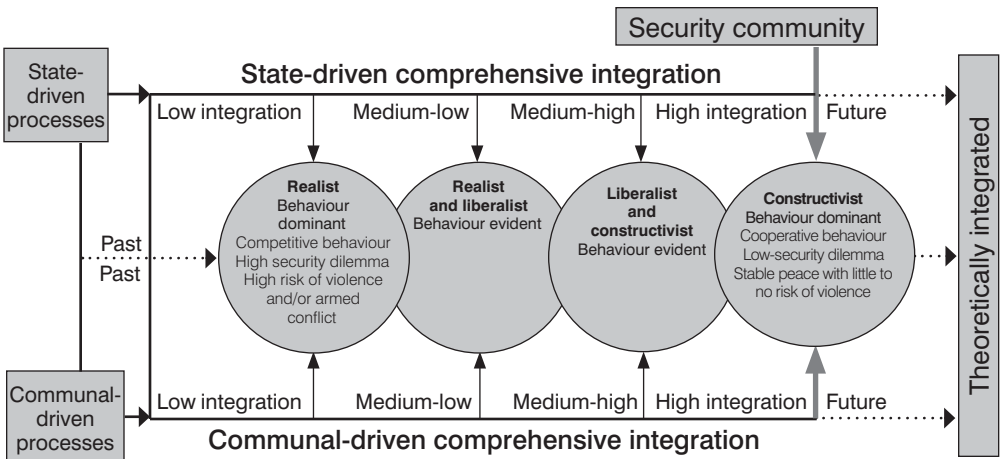
FIGURE 1.2
The processes behind comprehensive integration



pathways by which a group of states may evolve from low integration to relatively high integration. In this context, and as a consequence of either state-driven initiatives (top-down) or communal driven processes (bottom-up), a collection of states can shift forward along the spectrum of integration depicted by the figure. While each of these push-pull integrative processes can alternatively influence the other and coexist at the same time, it is contended that between any collection of states within the international system one set of processes is likely to be more dominant than the other. Further, and regardless of which process (whether state or communally driven) is dominant, the secondary group of processes can either assist or detract from the primary group. In both Northeast and Southeast Asia, for example, and regardless of whether all the political elite of all the East Asian states wholeheartedly commit to “community building” in the future, the secondary “communal-driven” process may in fact act to inhibit the pace of integration due to the challenge of history and the rivalry and tension that may continue to be associated with it.

In returning to the discussion at the beginning of this section, Figure 1.3 illustrates the “possibility” that at a low level of integration the types of behaviour predicted by the realist paradigm (the logic of

FIGURE 1.3
The impact of integration on inter-state behaviour



consequences) is more likely to be dominant whereas at a high level of integration states alternatively seek intra-mural cooperation with a view to attaining absolute gain (as opposed to relative gain) where the logic of appropriateness dominates. As states move along the spectrum of comprehensive integration then the various patterns of behaviour as predicted through the neo-liberalist paradigm starts to emerge whereby the security dilemma is reduced through economic interdependence and cooperative security arrangements. As both the frequency of cooperation and the level of interdependence rise, the more state actors are likely to be socialized, *ceteris paribus*, into a collective identity and the forms of behaviour likely to fit within the worldview of the constructivists become more prevalent. Eventually, at an adequately high level of integration, the security dilemma is all but mitigated and an integrative peace, followed by a stable peace, emerges amidst the community of states. A brief overview of where Asia might sit within this spectrum of integration, together with the actual and potential impact of Asia's institutions, forms the subject of analysis in the next section.

GREATER ASIA: REGIONAL DYNAMICS AND INSTITUTIONAL INFLUENCES

Depending on one's perspective, Asia's international institutions potentially include a number of regions, sub-regions, sub-systems, and/or security complexes. For the purpose of simplicity, the analysis has been limited to the states within Southeast Asia (e.g. the ASEAN states), South Asia (e.g. the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, or SAARC, states) and Northeast Asia (e.g. Japan, China, North Korea, South Korea and, arguably, Taiwan). Again, for simplicity, these three geographic areas will be referred to as "regions". In regard to these three regions, the starting proposition shall be that although they share many commonalities in terms of their histories, patterns of migration and language, the three regions simultaneously behold equally significant differences in their histories, strategic alignments and security architecture. Moreover, and within each region, one can also find significant differences in political systems, political ideologies, religion, ethnicity, language and,

again, political alignments. While all three of regions remain relatively un-integrated, as will be seen, there also remain considerable differences in the international relations of each region.

In the case of South Asia, the region was strongly polarized during the Cold War, with India being a major arms importer of the Soviet Union while Pakistan maintained close relations with China and, later, the United States. The security dilemma associated with the South Asian power balancing has resulted in the development of nuclear weapons by both India and Pakistan. Antipathy and mistrust between India and Pakistan have also been recently aggravated by a growing alliance between India and the United States. This alliance resulted in a ten-year defence agreement between the two countries in June 2005. Nonetheless, South Asia's label as one of the most violent regions on earth is primarily due to domestic drivers associated with religion and ethnicity rather than armed conflict between states. In Northeast Asia, by contrast, the primary threat to peace and stability can be located in the nature of inter-governmental relations. Such relations have all been hampered by historical antagonisms including World War II and strongly bipolarized security environments during the Cold War, the results of which include a divided Korea and an isolated Taipei. Nonetheless, a significant basis for the emergence of new challenges in this region has been the pace of economic growth in China. This has, in turn, aided the country's military modernization programme and shifted the balance of power away from the U.S. allies of Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. Unlike South Asia or Southeast Asia, the volatility in the region's relations has meant that Northeast Asia has thus far been unable to establish an indigenous supranational grouping such as ASEAN or SAARC.

In regard to Southeast Asia, some scholars consider the region to be a "cultural shatter belt" that is not only diverse and fragmented but also balkanized. Indeed, during the early decades of independence, some limited conflict did occur (e.g. Confrontation) and the region was also extremely polarized between a largely Western-oriented and capitalist South and a Communist North (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia). However, in recent decades, relatively less power balancing has been evident between the ASEAN states. As a partial consequence of this, together

with the possible affect of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on regional relations, there has also been relatively less involvement by major exogenous powers in the realm of traditional security issues. This is not to suggest that exogenous powers such as the United States have not played a role in the region but that such a role has been relatively low key and certainly less controversial amongst the ASEAN member-states. To the extent that some ASEAN members have sought military modernization programmes or the maintenance of power, such as Singapore and Vietnam, they have been largely motivated by considerations other than great-power alliances or rivalry.

While each of the regions have suffered from significant volatility at various times, whether domestic or trans-national in origin, it is important to note that in Southeast Asia, full-scale armed conflict has never occurred between the ASEAN members. Moreover, ASEAN's proposal to become a security community and negotiations for an ASEAN charter reflect an intention to integrate both politically and economically. Nonetheless, to date multilateral integration and cooperation between the ASEAN states has been relatively more successful within the economic realm. Examples of economic cooperation include the ASEAN Free Trade Area, the ASEAN Investment Area and the ASEAN Surveillance Process. ASEAN has also facilitated the development of other extra-regional institutions such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) Framework. While the East Asia Summit has thus far been limited to a few short hours of meetings, progress within the APT format has been more substantive. The Chiang Mai Initiative is one example to stem from the APT forum and it has involved 16 bilateral currency-swap arrangements worth over US\$80 billion. South Asia's SAARC, by contrast, was only established in 1985 and is consequently far more embryonic in format. The members have also demonstrated relatively little genuine political will to pursue integration. An example of the difficulty of achieving cooperation in South Asia has been demonstrated through the many "longwinded" and unimplemented provisions in SAARC's own version of AFTA, the South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA).

While formal multilateral security cooperation in each of the three regions has been difficult to achieve, bilateral and trilateral security coop-

eration is increasingly common in Southeast Asia. A notable example of such cooperation has been the “Eyes in the Sky” surveillance programme between Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia to combat piracy in the Malacca Straits. In all three regions a significant range of confidence- and security-building measures has been implemented but again the ASEAN states have been the most proactive in this area. Interestingly, one of the few successful examples of preventative diplomacy recently occurred through the Six Party Talks on the North Korean nuclear weapons crisis but this is also notable for the involvement of major powers, including the United States. Unlike South Asia and Northeast Asia, the ASEAN states have made a number of attempts to formally establish regional mechanisms for preventative diplomacy but the final products of these negotiations, namely the ASEAN Troika and the High Council, remain weak, under-institutionalized and handicapped by a consensus-based decision-making process.

Perceptions regarding neighbouring states (and people) can potentially represent another issue to which ASEAN’s longevity as an institution may have had some impact. For example, two surveys have recently examined the various sets of perceptions regarding neighbouring communities in both Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia. In the case of Southeast Asia, the author conducted a survey that questioned people on the street on their perceptions of trust. In response to the question, “Do you believe you can trust all the Southeast Asian countries to be good neighbours?”, 38 per cent of the respondents indicated “yes” while 36 per cent indicated they were “unsure” and 26.4 per cent answered “no”.⁴ While these figures may be problematic as far as ASEAN’s own security community proposal is concerned, the level of trust in Southeast Asia is likely to be far higher than that of the turbulent period surrounding ASEAN’s inception. In the case of Northeast Asia, a 2006 Pew Survey found that 71 per cent of Chinese sample maintained a negative view of Japan while 70 per cent of Japanese sample maintained a negative view of China. While the two surveys are statistically incomparable, the general impression of negativity in Northeast Asia, when compared to the relative ambivalence displayed in Southeast Asia, seems to at least warrant further empirical research on the issue.

While several of the Southeast Asian states may have moved towards the middle of a spectrum of integration, the balance of behaviour in all three regions still tends to reflect the characteristics predicted by the realist paradigm. Thus, and even in the case of Southeast Asia, “community” type behaviour—as would be manifested through displays of affinity, kinship and reciprocity—has been primarily limited to interactions that do not conflict with the national interests of each member-state. Where the national interests of the ASEAN members are not complementary, their foreign policies continue to be formulated on the basis of relative gain and thereby contrary to the collective interests of the region. One example of such behaviour is the pursuit of bilateral FTAs, the nature of which, according to Christopher Dent, has been “more likely to bring division rather than inclusion to regional community building endeavours in Southeast Asia over the long run”.⁵ Further, the overlapping “noodle bowl” of bilateral FTAs will likely disadvantage the poorer members by facilitating trade diversion along with a reduction to the efficiency of trade through increased administrative costs and the absorption of additional resources. A snapshot of the limitations to any regional sense of community, as potentially generated by the existence of ASEAN, was articulated by former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin in respect to his negotiations for a Thai-U.S. FTA. In a 2006 address he stated that “we will be at a huge disadvantage to others if we lose our access to the U.S. market, as countries will pursue their own deals. We need to move now, before we have no more room to move”.

CONCLUSION

At the conceptual level of analysis, while the spectrum of comprehensive integration in this chapter accepts the possibility of behaviour akin to that predicted by all three of the major IR paradigms, this framework rejects the realist notion that international identities and international practices cannot be changed. In this sense, realism is considered to play a subordinate role to the fundamental process of socialization, as conceptualized within the constructivist literature. Thus, over time, positive instances of interaction between political elites, even when limited to

the type of cooperation predicted by realpolitik institutionalism, may socialize into existence a greater sense of trust, habits of cooperation and the development of a collective identity. As a given collection of states becomes more integrated, they may also consciously seek to accelerate the pace of integration and deepen the habits of cooperation through greater institutionalization. As indicated, the beginnings of such a possibility have already started to appear between the ASEAN states through the proposal for a security community and subsequent negotiations over an ASEAN charter. Nevertheless, the processes of integration and institutionalism (whether sociological or contractual in nature) will likely take several decades before the logic of appropriateness and considerations of absolute gain become the dominant basis for decision making throughout Asia.

At the more empirical level of analysis, much of the second section has focused on the impact of ASEAN to cooperation and integration in Southeast Asia. This is because ASEAN is one of the oldest and most entrenched international institutions in Asia. The level of stability and cooperation that has emerged in conjunction with the development of ASEAN (as nascent as it may be) is instructive of the potential role that broader international institutions—such as the APT and the East Asia Summit—can play in Greater Asia in the future. The need to facilitate greater trust, confidence, interaction and cooperation has been rendered all the more important given the broad range of traditional security concerns present in both Northeast Asia and South Asia. In this context, the more inclusive nature of the East Asia Summit can play an important role in extending norms of peaceful coexistence and cooperation into South Asia. Nonetheless, and given that virtually all of Asia's international institutions operate on the basis of consensus, the APT format is also important in that its smaller membership may facilitate easier agreement on initiatives for cooperation and integration. The challenge here will be how to develop each of these international institutions without detracting from the other. Finally, the brevity of this study has not only limited which international institutions could be considered but has also meant that many other issues relevant to the analysis were not deliberated.

NOTES

1. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (Eds.), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
2. Richard Ned Lebow, "The Long Peace, the End of the Cold War, and the Failure of Realism", in Richard Ned Lebow and Thomas Risse-Kappen (Eds.), *International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 23–56.
3. Muthiah Alagappa, "The Study of International Order: An Analytical Framework", in Muthiah Alagappa (Ed.), *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 39.
4. See, Christopher Roberts' Ph.D. dissertation, UNSW@ADFA 2007.
5. Christopher M. Dent, "The New Economic Bilateralism in Southeast Asia: Region-Convergent or Region-Divergent?" *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* Vol. 6 No. 1 (2006), pp. 81–111.

THE PRIMACY OF WESTPHALIAN LOGICS IN EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM

Yongwook Ryu

This chapter argues the continued primacy of the state sovereignty and non-interference norms in East Asia. For the purpose of this discussion, I will assume that there are clearly identifiable regions in the world. Thus Southeast Asia is a region, and basically notes the 10 ASEAN countries. Northeast Asia is also a region with Japan, South Korea, North Korea, PRC and Taiwan as its members. The term “East Asia” means the combination of Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia.

EAST ASIAN REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

East Asia is home to a plethora of international institutions. In this section, however, I will limit myself to the discussion of the following security organizations: the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Six Party Talks (SPT) in Northeast Asia. I will briefly describe these security organizations and then discuss their characteristics.

Leading the group of East Asian regional organizations is ASEAN. The association was created in 1967 and developed through a series of regional crises: Confrontation refers to a specific historical crisis) between Malaysia and Indonesia, the Cambodia conflict of the 1980s, the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 and potentially the current Myanmar situation. Its biggest success has been in two areas: economics and diplomacy. ASEAN

has not only deepened economic integration among its members but it has also successfully created a diplomatic community among the elite. By acquiring the dialogue partner status in the United Nations, ASEAN has also gained a much-deserved international recognition as a meaningful regional organization.

Stemming from but not reducible to ASEAN is the ARF. The ARF was created in 1994 in the hope that East Asia would follow the footsteps of Europe in the post-Cold War era by creating a multilateral forum leading to cooperation in security issues. The ARF is unique in that its membership is inclusive—involving all the great powers in the region—and it constitutes the only forum in the region where national representatives freely discuss security issues. The issues discussed cover not only major regional security threats but also non-traditional issues and internal matters of member states. Operating on the ASEAN Way, its weakness is that whatever is decided is non-binding, and consensual approach often means rather slow progress.

The 1995 Concept Paper of the ARF envisions development in three stages, beginning from confidence-building measures (CBMs), moving to preventive diplomacy, and finally reaching the stage of “approaches to conflict resolution”. The first stage will remain important throughout the process, and has occupied much work thus far in the ARF. However, the ARF is on its way towards the stage of a weak form of preventive diplomacy. Joint exercises in maritime security (since 2006) and disaster relief (from 2008) suggest that the participant countries have made some progress in confidence building and preventive diplomacy, albeit slower than some people’s liking.

In Northeast Asia and Central Asia, there are a couple of important regional security organizations or fora. The first is the Six Party Talks (SPT), the successor to the Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO). The SPT was initiated with the specific purpose of resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. Started in 2002, there have been six rounds of talks to date, the most successful in the form of the September 2005 and February 2007 Joint Statements. The September 2005 statement outlines the participants’ commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, while the February 2007 statement contains a

realistic hope of dismantling North Korea's nuclear facilities. While the SPT is different from the other regional organizations in that it does not have a secretariat or a founding declaration, and only meets on an *ad hoc* basis, it is important as it includes all the great powers. Indeed, the unforeseen benefit of the North Korean nuclear issue has been that the issue has brought the great powers, otherwise divided by their divergent preferences, together and made them cooperate over a substantial period on a major regional security threat. The February statement contains a seed for the talks to become a multilateral regional security forum or organization. The outlining of the five working groups, including the East Asian peace mechanism, all deal with key security issues in Northeast Asia and, so long as the parties are committed to regular meetings and discussions, the talks might end up as a much-needed Northeast Asian regional security forum or organization. In Central Asia, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was created in 2001 amidst growing fear of U.S. expansion into the region, among the regional powers. Its original aim was to facilitate cooperation through CBMs and information exchange, but has expanded over the years into economic and energy cooperation. Once again, the SCO resembles other East Asian regional institutions in that it adheres strictly to the sovereignty norms.

These regional security organizations are characterized by the following features. First, these institutions reflect the strong normative bias towards state sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention. Although ASEAN has moved somewhat away from whole-heartedly embracing the sovereignty norms, as the current Myanmar case demonstrates, it is still essentially an organization with an overwhelming emphasis on state sovereignty and the principle of non-intervention. The ARF is similar in this regard. While its member states exchange their views concerning certain domestic issues of member states rather freely, the ARF has vehemently protected the sovereignty norms. The SCO and the SPT are probably the strongest in protecting the sovereignty norms. The strength of these "sovereignty norms" reflects the colonial experience from which the modern nations of the regional countries emerged. Certainly humanitarian intervention seems beyond imagination among regional countries, but even criticism of domestic affairs of member states is often greeted

with resistance and caution from some countries.

Second, stemming from the first point, because of a strong emphasis on state sovereignty, the institutions do not have a strong independent voice. Even the most vibrant regional organization, ASEAN, puts significant limitation on the power of its secretariat. For instance, if the general-secretary of ASEAN wants to introduce new agenda or policy initiatives to ASEAN meetings, he first needs to consult and get approval from the Standing Committee, which is made of representatives from the ten member countries. This is so because the member states fear that the secretariat may end up becoming a beast with its own life. Thus the regional security organizations tend to be weakly institutionalized, their decisions non-binding, their approach to security issues consensual and slow, and hence concrete actions shallow and slow in coming.

Third, the most vociferous voice for multilateral security dialogue and cooperation in the region has come from small and medium powers. This includes ASEAN countries and South Korea. While we all realize that any kind of security cooperation would be meaningless without the corresponding involvement of great powers, contrary to the European experience, East Asian regionalism is not a great-power initiative. Indeed, this point may well be unique to East Asia. In Europe, Africa and the Americas, it was mainly the big regional powers that started the process. Given the mutual suspicion and divergent interests of regional great powers, it would certainly have been very difficult for them to initiate and successfully start a regional organization. But at the same time, because small and medium powers are in the driving seat of regional multilateralism, one always has the worry that once they pull out, it would lead to the collapse of regional organizations.

REGIONAL SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS, REGIONAL ORDER AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

While it is true that none of the regional organizations discussed here has been able to resolve a major security issue such as Taiwan, the Spratly Islands dispute, the North Korean nuclear issue and so forth, one should not discount the value of having regular meetings that provide opportuni-

ties for dialogue and exchange of information. Regardless of their effectiveness, at the bare minimum, these organizations are communicative arenas in which participants exchange their different views on security issues, learn to understand the dominant international norms, attempt to persuade one another through principled argumentation and alter each other's behaviour.

Here, I believe that ASEAN and the ARF have done very well. ASEAN and the ARF can be viewed essentially as norm-building organizations. The norms they have promoted are sovereignty norms, to be sure, but doing so has reduced uncertainty about the region enormously, as well as increased behavioural predictability and regional stability by introducing the basic code of conduct in inter-state relations in the region. Given that domestic instability was a major issue facing Southeast Asian nations in the post-colonial period, the sovereignty norms ensured their peaceful coexistence in a rather successful manner.

Second, the organizations have improved the level of trust among the regional countries through CBMs. Less than a decade ago, some countries were hesitant about participating in an international organization for fear of being exploited by the organization, or being pushed to a corner to make concessions by other smaller member countries. Today, even a reclusive regime like North Korea sees the benefit in participating in multilateral dialogues (i.e. the SPT). China has been an interesting case in that it has come a long way from doing things on a bilateral basis to being one of the big proponents of multilateral dialogues. Its hosting of the SPT, as well as its extensive participation in the ARF, suggests that the Chinese leadership also sees much benefit to be derived from participating in multilateral dialogues.

Third, as far as ASEAN is concerned, the organization has also produced a diplomatic community. The regular interactions at top governmental levels have inculcated a habit of consultation, dialogue and cooperation among its member countries. So when faced with a regional security problem, no one country thinks of taking unilateral action without consulting the other member states of ASEAN.

Thus I argue that regional organizations have contributed a great deal to establishing and maintaining a regional order in a Westphalian

fashion. But we know that the world is moving away from the Westphalian phase, and that is why we often see struggles between those that want to do things the old way and others that want to see a more fundamental change in the way things are done. However, on the question of community creation, I think that none of the organizations has really created a sense of community among their members. ASEAN may be an exception—though there I think that it has created some sense of community at the elite level, both diplomatic community and economic community. ASEAN sees some problems with its remaining as an elitist organization and hence tries to reach out to the grassroots level through social and cultural activities. This project has begun quite recently and remains to be seen how successful it will be in inculcating the same kind of “we” feeling among the ordinary peoples of Southeast Asia.

Beyond ASEAN, none of the other organizations has created any sense of community. To be more exact, none of the other organizations has ever envisioned such a thing to begin with. A more troubling part is that they could not have succeeded even if they had tried, and that they are unlikely to succeed in the near future. This is because of several reasons.

In Northeast Asia, past historical issues still loom large in regional inter-state relations. The Yasukuni visits by Japanese prime ministers, the history textbook issue and the comfort women issue all incite nationalist feelings. The Sino-Japanese rivalry (a more structural issue) makes it even harder for regional countries to begin and achieve a sense of community. In Central Asia, functional needs led to the creation of the SCO, and it remains the rationale behind the maintenance of the organization. There is no transformative purpose or desire on the part of its member states to consciously imagine themselves as a community, not merely a group of like-minded states, and transform the goals of the organizations.

The ARF has also not been successful in terms of community building, nor is it likely to succeed in the future. Here the problem has less to do with its purpose but more with its membership. There are simply too many countries with too diverse preferences and historical experiences. No one expects the ARF to contribute much to the community-building process, although it has assisted its member states to better understand

the perspectives held by other countries.

In summary, the regional organizations have contributed to the establishment and maintenance of regional order through norm-building process but they have largely failed to create a sense of community among their members. An exception is ASEAN, which has created at the elite level a sense of diplomatic and economic community.

INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEMENTARITY OR COMPETITION

Before making any policy recommendations, I would like to raise the issue of institutional complementarity and/or competition. Are the regional organizations complementing one another or are they more in competition against one another? The answer, as usual, is "It depends". It depends on two things: (i) which set of organizations are being discussed and (ii) the nature of the organizations.

To my mind, ASEAN and the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) complement each other, as do ASEAN and the ARF. The ARF and APEC complement each other very nicely, given their near-identical membership structures. One focuses on security, and the other on economics, and there is much synergy to be gained from interaction between the two. Indeed, it might even be possible to combine both organizations under the leadership of a common secretariat.

However, there are institutions that are in competition too. The ARF and the SPT is one such example. Both involve the major great powers and both deal with key regional security issues. Thus far, due to the limited focus of the SPT, not much competition has arisen. However, if the SPT develops along the lines outlined in its February 2007 statement, both will be in direct competition. To avoid such an eventuality, perhaps some division of labour would better serve the question of regional security management: the SPT can deal with key issues in Northeast Asia while the ARF can focus more broadly on issues affecting the greater region of East Asia.

The development of the SCO can also undermine the effectiveness of the ARF, and the vice versa. As mentioned previously, the strategic rationale behind the creation of the SCO is to counter the growing U.S.

influence in Central Asia. If this rationale intensifies in the future, the ARF can obviously suffer from it, since both the United States and China are the two most important participants in the ARF. Unquestioningly, China and the United States hold the key to the future development of regional security organizations. Due to their size and power, they hold an effective veto power on the pace and direction of organizational development.

CONCLUSION

The Sentosa Roundtable is based upon the premise that creating a community is good for peace and development. This is a reasonable assumption, since a community would less likely envision the use of force to settle disputes between members. How then can we develop communities?

Deepening economic interdependence through trade and investment, enhanced people-to-people flows and increased trust are all important. In other words, continue what countries have been trying to do thus far, and do more of it if possible. But other things can be done differently or better. Since its inception, the ARF has spent a great deal of time for building mutual confidence and trust among its members. Of late, it has also begun joint exercises in maritime security among its members, and will soon embark on similar activities in disaster relief. This is still part of confidence building, although one can view it as a nascent form of preventive diplomacy.

What the ARF needs to do is to move towards the expansion of joint exercises into other areas such as terrorism, where there is an obvious need for regional cooperation. At the same time, its member states need to deepen the depth of their activities. Hence, rather than merely holding joint exercises, its member countries can sign a binding agreement to implement certain concrete policies. Such policies do not have to be about national security issues; they can be simple agreements about the timing and nature of joint exercises and so on. But doing so will carry a lot of symbolic value.

A PROBLEM-DRIVEN APPROACH TO EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM

Shin-wha Lee

As the experience in the post-Cold War era has shown, multi-lateral institutions certainly obtain considerable leverage in the international relations of East Asia. Regarding the future direction of regional security order, international institutions function not only as the arena for discussion but also as a means to construct a stable, elastic and adaptive regional community structure. Still, in order to analyse the degree of influence of international institutions as a variable in international relations, we need to restrict the domain of our analysis to sub-regions. Both geographically and functionally, Asia as a region shares few common denominators in military and non-traditional security matters. Approaches to international and regional institutions also differ in sub-regions, especially in Northeast and Southeast Asia.

WHITHER THE RELEVANCE OF INSTITUTIONS

In Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which was established in 1967, could be seen as the first institutionalized effort to promote regional cooperation. However, ASEAN was unable to play any significant role in promoting regional cooperation during the first decade of its existence, as member states were often more preoccupied with addressing their domestic issues rather than issues of regional concern. Nevertheless, ASEAN became the focus of international attention in 1976 and 1977, when its member states reaffirmed their commitment

to promoting peace, freedom and political independence in the South-east Asian region at the ASEAN summit meetings held in Indonesia and Malaysia, respectively. Though cooperation efforts since then have mostly been focused on addressing economic issues, there have been recent efforts to increase security cooperation within the frameworks of ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). However, these efforts have mostly remained at the level of exchanging information or ideas on issues of common concern, and have been insufficient in the development of any specific regulations and enforcement authority aimed at promoting regional security.

The level of inter-state cooperation in Northeast Asia lags further behind that in Southeast Asia. The region not only lacks an institutional mechanism for inter-governmental multilateral cooperation but also a regional power with the legitimacy to assume a leading and responsible role in regional collaboration. As economic regionalism has developed to some extent in post-Cold War Northeast Asia, multilateral institutions now seem to be accepted as a method to achieve revisionist goals for China, Japan and South Korea. China, seeking to establish national status as a great power, now emphasizes the value of multilateralism for the just, legitimate and effective management of security issues. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), an *ad hoc* coalition of opponents to U.S. dominance, in the view of some, represents such a development. Japan, also pursuing to become a “normal” great power, has relied on its active participation in regional and global institutions since the 1980s to propel its political influence. For South Korea, multilateralism is now accepted as a modality for achieving more autonomy from surrounding great powers and to facilitate reunification with North Korea. Although the tradition of bilateralism remains strong in Northeast Asia, multilateralism is now a major agenda or common goal in bilateral talks.

The role of regional institutionalism in Northeast Asia needs to be evaluated by issue area. Regarding traditional military security issues, the core alliance triangle comprising the United States, Japan and South Korea remains influential despite recent disharmony, with the possibility of a China-Russia coalition emerging as a rival. There is little prospect that this alliance structure would develop into a multilateral security

organization but the Six Party Talks (SPT) has demonstrated utility as a mechanism for the multilateral management of military issues. Although the compromise between North Korea and the United States—a bilateral matter—was at the core of the nuclear crisis, the multilateral structure of the SPT complements bilateral relations. Regarding non-traditional security concerns such as energy, environment, human trafficking and health, international institutions at the global level play a significant role by coordinating national efforts or stimulating the states to create regional cooperative mechanisms for dealing with those challenges.

However, obstacles to regionalism remain strong in Northeast Asia, impeding the development of regional institutions. Many identify insufficient globalization and the modernization of regional states, which led to unequal development and were accompanied by parochial state-centric views, as the major factors responsible for the underdevelopment of regionalism in this region. Furthermore, the lack of legitimate leadership, difficulties in finding common ideational ground, limited experience in institutionalized cooperation and historical enmity have also obstructed efforts to achieve full fledged regionalism. Unless these problems are managed, regional institutions will only be able to play an adjunct role, despite regional advocacy of the value of multilateralism.

INCONGRUENCE BETWEEN IR THEORY AND PRACTICE

Approaches based on the three major theoretical arguments of international relations discipline (realism, liberalism and constructivism) seek to provide parsimonious explanations of real-world events. A specific analytic perspective may show its explanatory power by privileging a certain approach over and to the exclusion of others. However, theoretical parsimony often does not comport with the complexity of the real world. In this respect, the empirical analysis of regional institutions cannot be reduced solely to either contractual institutionalism or sociological institutionalism. When considering the characteristics of regionalism and multilateralism, a problem- rather than approach-driven style of analysis better fits the complexity of regional institution building.

Regionalism is often an ambiguous concept, defined and redefined

through different relations of time and space. Past studies on regionalism, including the earlier functionalist and neo-functionalist proposals and the latest arguments of “new regionalism”, have encountered this conundrum. An analytic definition of regionalism requires us to capture first its static or unchanging features, but because regionalism is a dynamic phenomenon realized through state interaction, it is also necessary to leave the concept open and adaptive to political, economic and social developments. Regionalism represents the formalization of political and socio-economic ties among the countries in a region but it also implies the phenomenon of those ties in operation.

No single epistemology or ontology dominates the study of regionalism, but various approaches illuminate what needs to be included. Each confirms the necessity of looking at domestic and international factors together in order to understand a region, which is an intermediate level between the two. Regionalism is taking place between a globalizing world, where the concept of sovereignty is disintegrating, and the continuing assertiveness of sovereignty, which constantly reaffirms state autonomy. Regionalism is a political process that is pursued in accordance with each state’s own strategic goals and thus is in the middle of formation and reformation, but there are elemental facets that are resistant to changes.

A REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE IN TRANSITION

The 1997 regional financial crisis and the contagion effect of the economic shock provided a big momentum in transcending the geographical difference between Northeast and Southeast Asia and advanced East Asian cooperation. ASEAN countries initiated regular meetings at the cabinet and head-of-government levels with their counterparts from Japan, China and Korea <<AQ: Is this South Korea?>>. These meetings take place both on a “ten-plus-three” as well as a “ten-plus-one” basis. Since its inception in 1997, the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) process has taken up various measures to expand and deepen cooperation between the two sub-regions, and East Asian countries are now taking concrete steps towards achieving the goals of closer integration and overcoming commonly-held challenges. In 1999, the leaders of the APT adopted the

Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation. Although the financial crisis weakened not only individual affected countries but also ASEAN as a collective entity, ASEAN's initiative to forge cooperation with the big East Asian "three", namely Japan China, and South Korea, has enabled ASEAN to reinforce itself. In other words, an outward-looking and open attitude has not weakened the relevance of ASEAN but rather consolidated it. ASEAN's initiative also proved instrumental for its Northeast Asian partners, which never had an opportunity to develop the habit and practice of thinking as a "collective three". The APT process has therefore served as the "glue" that binds the three Northeast Asian countries together, to a certain degree.

It is worth noting that ASEAN has attempted to widen regional cooperation arrangements on the basis of a "concentric-circles approach". By consolidating cooperation among ASEAN countries, they can participate more effectively in the larger regional grouping, which would in turn strengthen their engagement at the global level. Therefore, ASEAN member states would want to maintain their leadership in managing the APT process not only because the establishment of the APT was an ASEAN initiative but because they are concerned that the agenda and interests of ASEAN would be prevailed by the broader regional arrangements. Accordingly, the *raison d'être* of ASEAN and the APT is to cope with the China challenge in the Southeast Asian and South China Sea settings, not the Northeast Asia issues. ASEAN countries are very apprehensive of their three "giant" partners from the north playing a leadership role in the process of institutionalizing East Asian regional cooperation. ASEAN countries have been strongly motivated to ensure that they remain as the "hub" not only in the APT process but also in the evolution of an East Asian community. In a nutshell, the APT is an exclusively East Asian regional entity that then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia has been advocating for years. This is distinct from the inclusive regionalism of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), which includes the United States and other Western states.

In comparison, the ARE, which was established by the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference in 1994, is a forum that represents security cooperation among Asia-Pacific countries, including the United States,

Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It aims to enhance dialogue and cooperation for peace and stability, as well as facilitate confidence-building and preventive diplomacy, in the Asia-Pacific region. The founding of the ARF symbolized a transition from a Cold War security order to a post-Cold War security order. In the Cold War era, East Asian regional security was principally defined by bilateral alliances. A bilateral alliance is an effective measure for allies facing a common threat. However, with the end of the Cold War, and the attendant diminution of the Soviet threat, the concept of security was expanded to include the non-traditional aspects of security, and thus introduced the concept of comprehensive security. Particularly in Southeast Asia, environmental issues have become a crucial concern for regional security.

While the ARF has proved useful as a multilateral security dialogue forum, it lags well behind the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in institutional terms. The ARF merely sustains its image as an East Asian security mechanism. Moreover, security perspectives of the countries in East Asia have not yet overcome “individual state-centric” thinking. Even as any discussion or proposals on the institutionalization of regional cooperation efforts would first require a concrete examination of how to coordinate respective national interests and different policy directions, the task of establishing a regional security cooperation regime that would satisfy all countries involved will be a tall order.

In addition, just like the APT process, ASEAN member states want to remain at the core of the ARF, which was also the result of an ASEAN initiative. It is unlikely that security issues in the Northeast Asian region, such as the Korean question, will be priority security concerns for the ARF. There are increasing claims within the Northeast Asian region to develop an independent cooperation forum or a separate framework for dialogue within the ARF and/or APT processes, which would address security issues indigenous or unique to the Northeast Asian region. At present, Northeast Asian regionalism remains undeveloped. The process of building an effective regional security regime in Northeast Asia is expected to be a long and tedious task. Nevertheless, the whole process itself would be able to promote dialogue and the exchange of views. This is significant, as

it will ultimately contribute to setting the stage for political dialogue that will help promote regional security and peace. Northeast Asian countries have attempted to increase regional confidence building and cooperation efforts within the various East Asian and Asia-Pacific frameworks, in line with the broader trend of regional cooperation in other regions. On the other hand, political and security cooperation among Northeast Asian countries has also recently emerged as an important policy issue. Once a regional cooperation regime is established, regardless of whether or not it succeeds in addressing and resolving particular security issues, the regime itself will also have the authority to promote inter-state cooperation efforts.

The institutionalization of regional multilateral security cooperation efforts can contribute to promoting peace and security in the Northeast Asian region in many ways. First, the construction of a regional multilateral security cooperation regime can regularize dialogue among states in the region and in turn provide the opportunity for increased mutual understanding and cooperation on major security issues.

Second, because a multilateral security cooperation regime aims to enhance mutual interest and confidence building by conveying state intentions and increasing the transparency of state activities, developing and implementing the various mutual reassurance measures (MRMs) and CBMs would be important in promoting multilateral security cooperation in Northeast Asia. This is because this process can contribute to accelerating arms reduction efforts and in turn help resolve regional as well as international security threats.

Third, the institutionalization of regional security cooperation can ensure a trade-friendly and economically sound region. In contrast, there is a high possibility that the economy-first policies of states in the region can contribute to increased regional security cooperation. For instance, China has continually made efforts to consolidate its cooperation efforts within the international community, as well as within the region so as to maintain its high level of economic development. Moreover, there are prospects that China will actively make an effort to increase multilateral security cooperation in the region in order to consolidate its position as

a regional power and thus undermine the influence of the United States and Japan in the region.

Fourth, a multilateral security cooperation regime can contribute to promoting regional peace and stability by providing fundamental principles and codes of conduct in conducting inter-state relations among states in the region. As confidence building in Europe first started with the adoption of fundamental principles, a stable regional order can be constructed in Northeast Asia by establishing a code of conduct in carrying out regional multilateral security dialogue and cooperation efforts. Provisions that can be applied for regulating state relations in the Northeast Asian region include those that relate to guaranteeing state and territorial sovereignty, the non-use of force, non-intervention in internal affairs as well as specific provisions that relate to promoting economic cooperation, environmental protection and cooperation in combating terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime and illegal migration. Thus, the institutionalization of multilateral security cooperation efforts is viewed as a step towards strengthening preventive diplomacy as such efforts can decrease or remove the possibility of conflict from occurring.

In summary, the security environment of Northeast Asia is undergoing change in the midst of competition among the United States, Japan, China and Russia for regional power. In other words, the security situation in the region is rapidly undergoing change at the middle of the various conflict situations brought about by U.S. plans for a missile defence system, Sino-Japanese competition for regional hegemony, territorial issues, the Taiwan question, the U.S.-led “war on terrorism” and the remilitarization of Japan, among others. At the same time, it has become more important for countries in the region to make a collective and multilateral approach in addressing regional security issues as well as discuss ways to relieve military tensions and build trust through a multilateral security cooperation regime, in line with efforts to maintain existing bilateral security frameworks in the region. Northeast Asian countries have more or less arrived at a consensus on to the need to build a “bi-multilateral cooperation framework” that would help promote peace and security in the region.

THE CASE FOR AN ISSUE-SPECIFIC APPROACH TO REGIONALISM

For East Asia's regional institutions to be effective, they need to be issue specific. With the United States playing a crucial role in regional security matters, regional institutionalism in Northeast Asia, and to some extent in East Asia, can neither be geographically based nor exclusive. Regional security arrangements are part and parcel of regionalism. Security regionalism includes removing conflict-generating factors or changing them into cooperative relations; it consists in the peaceful management of the issues. Certain countries face similar security threats and the destabilization of any country within the regional group can bring severe consequences to all other states within the region. Still, membership of a regional security complex is decided not only by geographical proximity but also by the salience of a state's role in a given issue area. For example, the United States can be a member of the Northeast Asian security complex since its actions have decisively influenced the regional security matter and also because it is highly sensitive to what happens in that region. Approaches based on geographically defined regional security complexes ignore the magnitude of the U.S. role in security matters. The post-Cold War security order of Northeast Asia is in many ways defined largely by the United States. Indeed, a U.S.-led global security structure has been the key factor in deciding regional security structures in East Asia; it has provided norms, rules and agendas.

TOWARDS EAST ASIAN COMMUNITY: REGIONAL INSTITUTIONALISMS

Discussions on the future establishment of an East Asian Community (EAC) were enlivened with the release of the report of the East Asia Vision Group (EAVG) in 2001. The report proposed the evolution of the APT process into an East Asia Summit (EAS) as a means of realizing the EAC. The mandate of the EAVG, a two-year project that ran from 1999 to 2001, was to formulate a common vision reflecting the rapidly changing regional and global environment and to provide the direction for future cooperation among East Asian countries. EAVG members, composed of

two non-governmental experts from each ATP member country, submitted their vision reports to the APT meeting in Brunei in November 2001. The report envisioned East Asia as evolving from a region of nations to a bona fide regional community and emphasized the necessity of regional cooperation in all aspects of society, including economic, political, security, environmental, social, cultural and educational areas. The members deliberated on such key questions as what the ultimate goals of East Asian cooperation should be, how such goals can be achieved and what institutional framework is required. They also recognized that the East Asian cooperation process should move beyond government efforts to involve the broader society and the people of the region.

On its part, the East Asian Study Group (EASG), launched in 2001 and comprising members of the APT Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) process, was mandated to review the modalities of cooperation in East Asia by both the government and private sectors. Its tasks were to assess recommendations contained in the final report of the EAVG and sort out concrete measures for East Asian regional cooperation, and to explore the implications of an East Asian summit.

Both the EAVG and EASG reports considered concrete implementation measures for further regional cooperation. Both propose the evolution of the APT process into the EAS and establishment of an East Asian community. In particular, the EASG stresses that the APT framework would remain the only credible and realistic vehicle to advance the form and substance of regional cooperation in East Asia. But the discussions revealed that ASEAN might be marginalized if the transition towards an EAS moves too fast, and that the EAS might be overburdened by too many meetings. In addition, steps would be necessary to nurture a greater sense of ownership among all members in striving towards greater East Asian cooperation. It was thus agreed that the EAS should be part of an evolutionary and step-by-step process.

After the official decision to launch an EAS was made at the 2004 APT, a first EAS was held in December 2005 in Kuala Lumpur. Taking a political rather than a geographical classification, ASEAN leaders brought Australia, New Zealand and India together with extant APT member states (with Russia granted observer status). The formation of this new

grouping invited controversy. For example, former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir criticized the summit as a “useless” club, although this new regional entity brought to fruition his idea of an East Asian Economic Grouping (subsequently changed to Caucus) proposed in the late 1980s. He argued that the inclusion of Australia and New Zealand would dampen East Asia’s voice.

EAS: WHO BEST TO LEAD?

The dispute over who would drive the EAS should also be settled. Incumbent Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi stressed that the APT and the EAS should exist in parallel but the APT (and particularly ASEAN) would be in the “driver’s seat” in building the East Asian Community since the EAS “would neither replace nor be an alternative to the APT”.¹ Together with China, Malaysia wants the APT to play a leading role for a future East Asian community-building process. All other ASEAN member states, just like in the APT and ARF processes, stress that the driving force in community building is neither the EAS nor the APT, but ASEAN itself, as per the Kuala Lumpur Declaration.

On the contrary, although the EAS still represents a big leap from the APT, Japan and Indonesia want the EAS to be the principal means for regional cooperation. The inclusion of Australia and New Zealand (and subsequently India) was part of an endeavour by Japan, Indonesia and Singapore, which wanted to counterbalance the possible dominance of China in the evolving regional order and security architecture. The settlement of this dispute over the summit’s leadership will be a vital issue in the new balancing game within the East Asian region building process.

Another salient component of the East Asian Community is the exclusion of the United States, which currently is neither a member nor an observer in the EAS. Washington is concerned that China would play a regional hegemonic role in this largest association of Asian countries (representing almost half the world’s population)—at the expense of the United States. Unlike in the case of its strong opposition to Mahathir’s proposal for the EAEG, the United States this time has had to accept the

new economic and political reality developing in East Asia. Washington seems to have no choice but to promote strategic partnership with China, the world's fastest growing market, as other Asian countries will not join an anti-Chinese alliance even if the United States attempts to recreate its Cold War rivalry with China. In turn, China wishes to maintain good relations with the United States not only because the latter is China's most important trade partner but because China needs Washington to overcome challenges and vulnerabilities in its increasing integration into the world economy. Whether the rise of China is regarded as an opportunity for cooperation or a threat to regional peace will be a crucial point in projecting the future of an East Asian community.

CONCLUSION

When East Asians speak of regional integration or regional community, it is unclear at times whether they mean the larger Asia-Pacific region or the more limited East Asian region. Those who advocate the Asia Pacific as one regional unit observe the East Asian community movement with reservation; some even see it as an obstacle to a broader regional cooperation process. On the other hand, there is growing support for the establishment of a "Northeast Asia-specific" institution. In the case of Europe, the region was fairly well defined compared to Asia. Thus far, none of the existing cooperative mechanisms (whether ASEAN, the APT, the ARF or the EAS) has taken on a central coordinating responsibility. In most cases, the level of regional multilateral collaboration has not progressed beyond the exchange of information or agenda setting for regional cooperation, with few concrete regional regulatory policies or measures. This reflects the nature and limitations of regional institutions where the primacy of national interests is unquestioned. Furthermore, ASEAN's own community-building process, as laid out in the ASEAN II Concord, can prove potentially thorny. ASEAN's insistence that it remains at the core of any East Asian community-building effort may also create problems with some of its Northeast Asian neighbours. Finally, efforts towards regional community will continue despite such obstacles. The likelihood is that a "bi-multilateral cooperation framework"—i.e. a

multilateral mechanism to complement existing bilateral relations and alliances—will emerge.

NOTE

1. Frank Frost and Ann Rann, “The East Asia Summit, Cebu, 2007: Issues and prospects”, E-Brief, 1 December (updated 20 December 2006), Canberra: Parliamentary Library, Parliament of Australia. Available at www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/FAD/eastasia_summit2007.htm.

IN PRAISE OF ISSUE-BASED INSTITUTIONALISM

WAYS FORWARD FOR ASEAN AND EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM

Shiping Tang

The original institutionalism in International Relations (IR) has been excessively influenced by *functionalism* in sociology and anthropology. This is so despite the fact that functionalism had already been discredited in the latter disciplines by the time Robert Keohane wrote his treatise.¹ In functionalism, every institution (i.e. organization) exists for a purpose. Yet, functionalism has little to say about how institutions emerge. It does not have a theory of institutional change, nor does it have a theory of institutional system or social order.² Keohane and his followers, however, departed from functionalism in sociology and anthropology in one important aspect: institutionalism IR takes *organizations* as *institutions*. This is not the way sociology and other social sciences approach it. For most scholars, institutions are (informal or formal) rules of social life. In fact, Douglass North took pains to make sure that organizations are not quite the same as institutions. Organizations are actors in social life, whereas institutions are supposed to be rules of social life.³ I think this emphasis has its merits.

ORGANIZATIONS VERSUS INSTITUTIONS

I therefore regard ASEAN, the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) and so forth as *organizations*, not institutions. Of course, an organization must have some rules to operate, though rules do not make an organization an institution. Once we have the general theory of institutional change,

in which heart lies the struggle for power to impose rules, it becomes apparent that whereas in domestic politics, the state (or an actor who won the struggle of power to impose rules) can impose his preferred rules, there is no possibility of imposing a whole institutional system (or a set of rules or order) in post-World War II international politics, save the American imposition of order in Western Europe and in Japan and the Soviet imposition of order in Eastern Europe. Both cases of successful order making were backed by supreme power. Without the backing of power, it would have been impossible to impose an order.

With the principles of territorial integrity and state sovereignty enshrined in international politics (which was, without doubt, a major progress in international life), no country can impose an order through military force upon another country without provoking international uproar. As such, even between two states with significant differences in their level of physical power, the weaker state can still bargain with the stronger state, knowing full well that the stronger state cannot just invade it. As such, rules-based organizations can only be created by making specific rules for specific issues. To create a system, you first make two (or more) parts. Issue-based rules are what make rules-based institutions. Essentially, all institutions are initially issue-driven, but then agents design a broad system of rules. Eventually, these issues-based rules gel into a system, thus facilitating the emergence of a rules-based system.

Within ASEAN, there is at its surface no possibility for any single country to impose an order. In fact, the opposite is true. Because ASEAN relies on the ASEAN Way of consensus and consultation, any member state in fact has a sort of veto power on the whole organization's attempt to impose a set of rules. Thus, for a still-developing institution like the ASEAN, issue-based rules is the natural road towards a more rules-based institution or organization. For an organization such as ASEAN, which lacks enforcement mechanisms, it has to make rules first. In this respect, broader rules (i.e. a charter) can only be a very general thing, subject to differing interpretation and usually based on the lowest common denominator. For specific issues, states still have to haggle with each other and hammer out some rules.

CONCLUSION

The crackdown on protesters in Myanmar, the haze from Indonesia, climate change and so on can be testing grounds for the capacity of ASEAN to make specific rules for specific issues. If ASEAN can come up with some specific and explicit rules on coping with these issues, ASEAN should be considered a success, even if its charter does not have much binding power. In terms of the ASEAN Plus Three and the East Asia Summit (EAS), there is no easy way to move forward. The EAS is better understood as a way to balance the weight of the Northeast Asian powers, specifically China, within the context of East Asian regionalism. This is not necessarily a bad thing, particularly if the EAS makes the ASEAN states and the United States feel more secure. But certainly, it will be far more difficult to make binding rules within the EAS.

NOTES

1. Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).
2. Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: Free Press, 1951); Jon Elster, *The Cement of Society: A Study of Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
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ASEAN'S "LEADERSHIP" OF EAST ASIAN REGIONALISM

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Ron Huisken

ASEAN can justly be proud of the pioneering role it has played in introducing the society of states in East Asia to the potential for multilateral processes to make a positive contribution to stability, harmony and prosperity in the region. ASEAN has set out quite deliberately to lead the process of forging a stronger sense of community in East Asia and to conduct what might be called a "managed open-door policy" with respect to the engagement of major powers in Southeast Asia. Quite naturally, ASEAN is very keen to avoid domination by any one major power and the aggressive competition among the major powers to achieve such dominance. ASEAN does not want to be forced to choose one power over another so it aspires to ensure that all interested major powers have a stake in the stability and security of Southeast Asia and feel effectively constrained (or socialized) as to the means they employ to accumulate influence in the region. A task that is strongly implicit in this strategic objective is the one of shaping relations between the major powers. It is also reasonable to suppose that ASEAN leaders saw this outward-focused mission as helpful in developing further cohesion within ASEAN, not least in the sense that the association could not credibly promote forms of regionalism in Greater Asia that ASEAN itself did not exemplify or was not ready to embrace.

Fifteen years after the end of the Cold War, ASEAN has established a near monopoly over these regional community-building processes. Moreover, ASEAN is overtly defensive of its leadership role. It is virtu-

ally a rule that statements emerging from these forums reiterate ASEAN leadership. Thus, statements from the second East Asia Summit (EAS) and the 10th ASEAN Plus Three (APT) in January 2007 refer to “ASEAN as the driving force” while the statement from the 12th ASEAN Summit, also held in January 2007, reaffirmed “that ASEAN should consolidate its leading and central role in the evolving regional architecture”.

One thoughtful and sympathetic investigation into how ASEAN has conceptualized the challenge it faces to manage and guide the postures of the major powers towards Southeast Asia suggests that the broad objective has been to aspire to a hierarchical regional order that retains America’s dominant superpower position while incorporating China in a regional great-power position just below it. Many observers may be inclined to regard geopolitical fine-tuning on this scale as a pipe dream, particularly if the practitioners are a group of mostly small-to-medium sized countries whose own cohesiveness is relatively modest. On the other hand, ASEAN has indisputably enjoyed a measure of success. Southeast Asia itself is free of any serious prospect of inter-state conflict (indeed, the region has steadily strengthened its credentials as a *de facto* Deutschian “security community” or a grouping of states characterized by confident expectations of peaceful change) and the intersection of great-power interests in the region has thus far been managed without significant stress.¹

AN “ASEAN PLUS” APPROACH TO REGIONAL LEADERSHIP?

The questions worth asking therefore are, first, “How is it that ASEAN has managed to protect its claim to be the leader and driving force of regionalism in East Asia?” and, second, “Is it sensible for the wider region to rely on ASEAN to succeed unaided?” My own answer to the second question is probably “No”. A key to the success of ASEAN’s game plan is to engineer deeper engagement between and the development of collegiate instincts amongst the major powers beyond the arena of Southeast Asia. However one assesses ASEAN’s success in building a sense of Asian community, it is harder to argue that it is making clear headway in bringing the major powers together. Just as the command economies

learnt that banishing market forces was an exercise in futility, multilateral security processes must work within the realities of the extant and prospective relative strategic weight of states in the grouping. From our present standpoint, few can imagine regionalism in East Asia taking on the deep, institutionalized integration and the substantial pooling of sovereignty that characterizes the European Union. And in the absence of such a development, no imaginable development of multilateralism in Asia can significantly displace the elemental instincts that states have to deter or defend themselves against perceived threats to their national interests and aspirations.

Two relationships of irreducible importance to the future of East Asia remain disappointingly—some would say even ominously—resistant to transformation in the direction of constructive partnerships: those between the United States and China, and between China and Japan. The U.S.-China relationship continues to be characterized by powerful—and shared—instincts of caution and watchfulness. Things are moving in East Asia, all the way down to the “tectonic plates” or basic relationships of power and influence that determine the directions of change and who shapes these directions. So far, however, none of the key players seems prepared to anticipate this fact and to begin the process of ensuring a soft landing by exploring the parameters of a smooth accommodation.

Similarly, in the case of China and Japan, Asia's approximate equivalent to centuries of German-French rivalry, the first 20 years after World War II passed without a serious effort at reconciliation because they were on opposite sides of the Cold War divide. The next 20 years were also lost in favour of joint vigilance towards the Soviet Union. Since the end of the Cold War, competition for influence in East Asia has flourished alongside growing economic integration. With neither side inclined to launch and sustain bold policies to transform the relationship, the weight of history has dragged it down.

It seems clear that all three powers are not yet prepared to subject their wider bilateral relationship to the discipline and constraints of an institutionalized process. The prevailing judgement in all three capitals appears to be that preserving maximum autonomy still seems to promise

better outcomes compared to signalling a preparedness to consider collective management of regional affairs. And, to answer the first of the questions posed above, in the absence of such preparedness, the major powers have been content to leave the field to ASEAN, confident in ASEAN's assurances that it would a cautious and careful driver proceeding at a pace comfortable to all.

Perhaps the most conspicuous manifestation of tensions in these vital bilateral relationships has been the propensity to develop separate regional networks that exclude the leader of the "opposing" camp. China has made plain its strong preference to see East Asian regionalism taken forward in the APT forum rather than in the EAS. Both exclude America but the latter includes India, Australia and New Zealand all of whom are deemed, to varying degrees, to be sympathetic to U.S. interests. China has also invested a great deal of energy in accelerating the development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), doing things in and with this body that it has been much more cautious about in the ASEAN Regional Forum. The "matching" developments on the other side include the Trilateral Security Dialogue (the United States, Japan and Australia) and the more nascent proposal for a quadrilateral coalition of democracies (the United States, Japan, India and Australia).

THE CHINA QUESTION

Beijing constitutes ASEAN's biggest challenge in the latter's attempt to organize the major powers into a stable and durable alignment. Broadly speaking, ASEAN's difficulty with the United States has always been that Washington's attention has been too little and too inconstant rather than too much. This is not a difficulty that it is likely to encounter with Beijing. China is huge, proximate and contiguous (three ASEAN states share a land border with China). Moreover, in the light, *inter alia*, of China's sweeping claims in the South China Sea, it seems likely that Beijing views Southeast Asia as part of its proper sphere of influence, that is, a region in which it should be able to create a disposition to put Beijing's interests ahead of those of other major powers. Failure to achieve this would allow the region to be a vulnerability, a chink in the armour, as

China aspires to develop beyond the ranks of a major power into the realms of a great power.

As is well known, there is a full spectrum of views on how far and how high the goals of China's elite may reach. There is substantial unanimity, however, on the judgements that China is committed to being a serious and determined player in "the game of nations" that it has resolved to take time to develop its strengths evenly and avoid being lured into an unbalanced development, that it has a strong preoccupation with the measurable dimensions of national power and a decidedly traditional "realist" perspective on why the international system works as it does.

China's authoritarian government can and has deployed the nation's assets with skill and disciplined consistency. At the same time, its most formidable competitor, the United States, is not only intrinsically less capable of disciplined consistency in foreign policy but has found itself saddled with a strategic blunder in Iraq that has soaked up all of its political energy for some six years and caused a disturbing erosion of its moral authority as the world's pre-eminent state. Thus, while China's trajectory has been sharply and substantively positive, its ascent is perceived as even more dramatic because of what has been happening to the United States. And perceptions, of course, can be and often are very important, especially so, perhaps, at the present moment when the possible fallout from the quagmire in Iraq includes a U.S. slide towards isolationism.

One senses that, at the present moment, circumstances have presented ASEAN with rather more China than many of its members are comfortable with, and with the outlook for an effective and timely re-balancing exercise on the part of the United States or Japan pretty doubtful. The still ill-defined relationship between the APT and the EAS, and the vigorous political manoeuvre going on behind the scenes in support of rival visions for this relationship, would seem to reflect this concern. The exclusion of America from these fora is problematic only in the sense that there is no forum on East Asia with real authority and a broad agenda that the United States is part of. A further option is potentially available in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. In 1989, APEC was the pioneering venture in multilateralism. It was elevated to summit level by President Bill Clinton in 1993 and has

managed to bring the leaders together every year since. Unfortunately, APEC is an awkward structure that reflects regional hesitations about multilateralism prevalent when it began, and neither its structure nor its agenda has evolved to match the authority and responsibility of the heads of government that participate in its meetings. When APEC has addressed non-trade issues such as terrorism or East Timor, it has been on an ad hoc basis and required the interested government(s) to make a determined political effort to commandeer the agenda. The potential of APEC has in a sense been wasted. Whether the competition from the APT and the EAS can evoke the political courage to revamp APEC and make it a more central player in the unfolding drama of regionalism in East Asia remains to be seen.

There is no prospect that current or foreseeable stresses arising from major-power engagement in Southeast Asia will result in conflict between the ASEAN states. The more real concern is that China's engagement will weigh unevenly on the ASEAN states and that eventual U.S. or Japanese countervailing steps, possibly sharpened by a sense of having already lost a lot of ground, will focus where China's influence is least developed and put pressure on the association's cohesiveness. Further, there has been speculation that the United States is likely, over time, to concede that trying to keep the Korean peninsula out of Beijing's orbit would be a fruitless exercise. Something similar can be envisaged for Southeast Asia with the United States eventually settling on balancing China from the island states that encircle East Asia.

CONCLUSION

In short, it seems that the risk is very real that ASEAN will find that it lacks the muscle to pull off its experiment in geopolitical fine-tuning. ASEAN will need help, ideally in the form of a forum in which the major powers are in the driver's seat and in which they accept responsibility to also try to devise a trajectory towards a stable accommodation for the management of East Asia's development. ASEAN leaders may be well advised to weigh the merits of this proposal against the admittedly attractive option of protecting ASEAN's monopoly of multilateral proc-

esses, and then to consider how they can best deploy their considerable influence in this arena to bring about the desired outcome.

NOTE

1. Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

NO COMMUNITY SANS CONCERT?

THE ROLE OF GREAT POWERS IN INSTITUTIONALIZING AN ASIAN SECURITY COMMUNITY

Tang Siew Mun

The Asian security landscape today is arguably more complex and fluid compared to the relative stability and predictability of the Cold War period. Granted that the bifurcation along ideological lines during the Cold War era created a tense stand-off between communist and non-communist states in the region, nonetheless, there existed a clear strategic architecture that underpinned Asian security. Both superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—maintained a sizeable military presence in the region and had extensive military ties with their allies. This structure began to unravel in the wake of the Cold War, with the withdrawal of U.S. and Soviet troops and military assets from the Philippines and Vietnam respectively. This development led many observers to comment on the power vacuum in the region and the “rise” of new powers to fill the strategic void. The end of the Cold War also gave a new lease of life to regionalism, as evidenced by the introduction of new regional arrangements (the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit) and, in some cases, the deepening of existing structures (ASEAN). The “new regionalism” of the post-Cold War era is markedly different from those before in two important aspects. It is more inclusive in nature, as evidenced by the East Asian Economic Group/Caucus (EAEG/EAEC) proposal and the East Asia Summit (EAS). It is also noted that Asian countries are more receptive to exploring avenues to include security-related issues on the regionalism agenda. Heretofore, South-

east Asian states—in the form of ASEAN—had shied away from any region-wide security arrangement, opting instead to secure themselves with bilateral security pacts with the great powers. Without discarding the old networks, there appears to be a new willingness to explore new ways to pursue security. One such measure is to create an Asian security community.

AN ASIAN SECURITY COMMUNITY: WHO AND WHAT?

Efforts to forge an Asian security community must address two crucial issues, notably, what constitutes “Asia” and what is meant by “community”. Asia is a collage of many countries. Its sub-regions include Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia. West Asia had traditionally been outside the political sphere of “Asia” and thus does not factor in the current formulation of an Asian security community. Clearly, the adoption of “Asia” goes beyond nomenclature and has real political implications and holds the key to the successful establishment of the security community. Issues surrounding membership had proved to be a major point of contention in past attempts to form the EAEG/C. Similarly, Asian states were caught in a political tussle over who should participate in the inaugural East Asia Summit. The wheels of realpolitik were in overdrive in the run-up to the summit. The jostling resulted in the inclusion of India and Australia, ostensibly after strong lobbying from Japan, with the intention to prevent the EAS from being dominated by the Chinese. The machinations of balancing were clearly at work. This suggests that even when states are willing to commit political capital and economic resources towards building a community, national interest and competition with rivals remains pivotal. The composition of the community would either “make or break” the endeavour. Each member brings with it power and capabilities that enhance the value of the community but they also bring along political baggage that undermines the cohesiveness and dynamics of the group. Therefore, having the right mix of members is crucial. Instead of being fixated on inclusion and not wanting to isolate any member, an incipient community founded by a select group of like-minded states can result in a cohesive and functional community.

How would such a community work? States act to protect and further their respective national interests. To this end, states guard their sovereignty and are anathema to any design that can dilute their positions and influence. The ASEAN Way of consensus decision-making effectively gives each member a veto. This way does not lend itself to forwarding-looking initiatives, as making progress is held hostage by the “lowest denominator” state. Discarding the consensus decision-making model means searching for a new *modus operandi*. The community should be rules-based, with built-in safeguards to assure weaker member states that they would not be strong-armed by the stronger members. Concomitantly, the community must possess the institutional capacity to govern relations among member states and crucially induce compliance.

For the community to survive and sustain itself, it needs to be functional and serve the needs of its members. This calls for the institutionalization of norms and a code of conduct, as well as clearly identifiable expectations, contributions and commitment. “Cheating” and free-riding must be addressed and prevented. Experience informs us that voluntary participation and contribution in times of crises is an inefficient way to foster cooperation. The stakes involved in security are high. Non-cooperation can be fatal and adversely affect the sovereignty and safety of states. A security community thus envisioned goes beyond existing frameworks or structures. It should not replicate or serve as an adjunct of existing formulations.

NO COMMUNITY SANS GREAT-POWER CONCERT?

ASEAN introduced a novel approach to security through the enunciation of the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in 1971 as a strategy to avoid great-power entanglement in the Cold War. ZOPFAN was long on rhetoric and short on substance as it was widely accepted that the ASEAN-5 (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) were staunchly anti-communist and had strong political, economic and military ties with the United States and its allies. The internal contradictions of ZOPFAN meant that beyond diplomatic circles, it was never taken seriously. ASEAN’s attempt to remain “neutral”

drew a sceptical response from the United States. ASEAN's search for security led to the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 1976. The treaty commits all signatories to peaceful means in resolving differences and conflicts between them. In other words, parties to the TAC pledge to forgo the use of force towards each other. Today, the treaty encompasses ASEAN and non-ASEAN states (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Russia and South Korea). This document conforms to the Deutschian formulation of a "no-war community". The TAC is an important component of the Asian security landscape but it has been ineffective in addressing security threats and concerns. It lacks the capacity (and thereby reflects the lack of political will of the signatories) to enforce peace. For example, there was little ASEAN could rely on when Vietnam launched an all-out war against Cambodia in 1978. Likewise, ASEAN is a mere bystander in the Korean nuclear crisis. In the case of addressing North Korea's nuclear ambitions, Asia—including Japan—clearly passed the buck to the United States and, to some extent, China. Existing multilateral security mechanisms such as the ARF should constructively engage all protagonists in an effort to contain conflicts.

Thus understood, a security community without the involvement and commitment of the great powers—China, Japan and the United States—is unrealistic. To realize the security community, the region needs these powers to be acting in concert to provide stability. Although somewhat idealistic, a concert of power system dampens great-power rivalry in the region and prevents the region from turning into a battlefield for great-power contestation. An Asian security community has to recognize the central role played by the great powers in regional security. China, Japan and the United States are perhaps the only actors that can and have an interest to underwrite regional security. A community that includes the great powers mitigates the possibility of Asian countries being used as "pawns" in great-power rivalry and prevents Asia from being a "prize" as well. Furthermore, notwithstanding their efforts at integration, Southeast Asian states remain mired in the old mindset that they are more fearful of each other than of others. Such suspicions and fear would be alleviated if there is a formal and functional security regime that outlaws wars.

Critics of the concert system are quick to dismiss the likelihood of China, Japan and U.S. collaboration. To be sure, these powers have their own agenda and strategic concerns. However, there is a common tread that binds them—regional peace and stability. The region’s strategic sea lines of communication and economic dynamism makes it imperative for all stakeholders to avoid any form of conflagration. This is a good basis from which to build a community. This essentially hierarchical community—with the great powers at the apex and the other members as “second-tier” entities—resolves a strategic dilemma among Asian countries. This framework makes deciding to balance against China or to bandwagon with China moot. Similarly, Asian states no longer have to choose between China and Japan. With the great powers underwriting regional security—resulting in the erasure of the security dilemma among Asian states—and the balancing effect of the great powers within this structure, the strategic perception moves from security *against* to security *with*. The operationalization of the community needs to be negotiated and embodied in a charter to insure against abuses and facilitate the smooth functioning of the community. A concert model with China, Japan and the United States each playing their respective roles in providing, maintaining and enforcing security addresses the issue of capacity, while the internal balancing among the great powers ensures that effort by any one party at hegemony would be futile.

CONCLUSION

Asian commentators and analysts often argue that Asia is different from Europe and the West. Relationships are based on trust. Cultural differences had—in the past—been used to preclude formal and legalistic approaches to regional relationships. This partly accounts for the preference to order inter-state relations based on principles such as consultations, consensus and non-interference. Support for the “old regime” is eroding and, as evidenced by the draft of the ASEAN Charter, Southeast Asia appears to be undergoing a sea change. States need to evolve and conform to the exigencies of the times and strategic environment to survive and prosper. The pendulum appears to be swinging—even ever

so slightly—towards hard institutionalization and legalistic approaches to international politics.

ASEAN and the proposed East Asia Community provide the building blocks for a future Asian security community. However, both formulations share the same institutional weakness—capacity. With ASEAN seemingly “in the driver’s seat” of both the proposed ASEAN security community and the Asia security community, these communities would be ineffective and are not expected to go beyond the “talk shop” threshold and confidence building.

The security community envisioned here is one that has a high degree of institutionalization and possesses the capacity to address and resolve security-related issues. The community—formulated around the concert model—relegates responsibility and authority to the great powers to maintain regional order. There is not a new state of affairs as the great powers—directly or indirectly—currently exert influence and have the capacity to shape regional affairs. By incorporating these powers into a regional framework, it serves to mitigate great-power competition and dampen suspicion among Asian states. Bestowing legitimacy to these powers effectively transforms them as stakeholders, which in turn enhances regional security. The hierarchical structure of the said community is an acknowledgement of the power disparity between the powers and other Asian states, and this appears to be a bearable price to pay in exchange for order and stability.

A new institution and framework outside existing models need to be considered. Present frameworks lack the capacity and political will to tackle security issues in a serious and concerted manner. Real security issues often become hostage to niceties of diplomacy. A concert-based community requires the collusion of the great powers—which are entrusted to exercise their hegemony in a benign fashion—and acceptance by Asian states. Both are problematic. The key lies in securing the cooperation of the great powers. In the mould of the Singaporean “exceptionalism”, once the system is set in place, the benefits and pragmatic considerations of the community would set in motion dynamics towards the enlargement of the community. Unlike non-traditional security issues,

not all states share the same strategic perspectives. Thus, a security community should have as its members those with similar security concerns, leaving out those with differing outlooks.

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ABOUT THE MULTILATERALISM AND REGIONALISM PROGRAMME

The Multilateralism and Regionalism Programme is one of the most active and prolific of research programmes at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), a professional graduate school within the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) of Singapore. Inaugurated in 2001, the programme conducts high-quality academic and policy-oriented research on multilateral and/or regional cooperation in the Asia-Pacific and its sub-regions (East, Northeast, and Southeast Asia) on the diplomatic, defence, political-security, and economic fronts. Its manifold publications include numerous op-eds and commentaries, oft-cited policy reports, books and monographs (both edited and single-authored) with notable international presses, special issues of leading academic journals, and the like. The programme also conducts numerous conferences, workshops and symposia, both independently as well as jointly with leading research institutes and universities from around the world. To date, the programme is the successful recipient of over a million dollars worth of competitive research grants from diverse international sources such as the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, AusAID, and the ASEAN Secretariat. Headed by Associate Professor See Seng Tan with the help of Dr Christopher Roberts, the programme consists of a small core of associates from the RSIS faculty as well as visiting researchers from the region and abroad.

What are the prospects of transforming the Asian region into a security community where regional states commit to peaceful relations and the avoidance of war with one another? Do regional institutions and the ongoing process of institutionalization in East Asia contribute to the quest for the security, peace and stability of the region? And how?

These are some of the questions that this monograph addresses, through assessments of the specific issues under consideration by the Sentosa Roundtable Study Group in its preparation for the second Sentosa Roundtable. The group assessed the relevance of regional inter-governmental institutions—the ASEAN Regional Forum, the ASEAN Plus Three, the East Asia Summit and so forth—to regional security, stability and community building in East Asia, among other issues.



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